THE GLOBE AND MAIL

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WILDFIRES

A resident walks among the ruins of his burned-out house after a wildfire in Pelayos de la Presa, near Madrid, on Wednesday. Spain's worst blazes on record have forced thousands to evacuate. PIERRE-PHILIPPE MARCOU/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

When 'all of Spain is burning,' volunteers roll up their sleeves

Community members provide a lifeline in shelters near Madrid

MARCUS YAM MADRID

On a recent afternoon at the Beats Fitness Club in Móstoles, southwest of Madrid, performers set up stage lights and speakers to perform a children's play at the makeshift wildfire shelter.

A volunteer nurse checked evacuees with a stethoscope. Others distributed food from local supermarkets and painted children's faces in a special "kid zone." Some of the children told their parents they didn't want to go home as they thought it was summer camp rather than a shelter for people fleeing wildfires.

While firefighters battle Spain's worst wildfires on record, a quieter operation has been under way in spaces such as the Beats shelter, as Spanish volunteers mobilize to help some of the 91,000 people across the country who were ordered to evacuate or remain in shelter owing to the fires that have destroyed at least 100 homes and reached 78,000 hectares.

Volunteer Sandra Lara, 35, of Móstoles, had first tagged along out of curiosity to see how she could help the 175 adults and children housed at the Beats shelter.

She soon found herself rolling up her sleeves, organizing donated clothes and helping to distribute them. She also gave out "a lot of hugs," she added. "They are our people and they left their homes without anything."

And if the fires weren't contained, her area could be next.

Some 150 volunteers in Móstoles have spanned out across three sports centres turned into evacuation shelters for more than 400 people. They join police forces, civil defence units, Red Cross workers and other health emergency services who were stationed to help.

SPAIN, A7

Fauci repeatedly pleads the Fifth in tense Senate hearing about pandemic's origins

NATHAN VANDERKLIPPE
INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENT

Anthony Fauci refused to answer questions from a U.S. Senate committee related to his involvement in research at a Chinese lab and the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic, citing a constitutional right to remain silent as Republicans accused him of hiding the truth.

As the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases until 2022, Dr. Fauci was one of the most senior leaders of the U.S. pandemic response. He also oversaw the issuance of research grants, including money directed to the Wuhan Institute of Virology, in the Chinese city where the spread of the new coronavirus was first detected.

Over the course of his 54 years at the National Institutes of Health, Dr. Fauci testified before congressional committees more than 200 times. But on Wednesday, he declined to answer any questions – even about the colour of his tie – instead citing the Fifth Amendment, which provides a right for people not to be compelled to self-incriminate.

The hearing marked the culmination of years of effort by Republicans to hold Dr. Fauci responsible for a litany of pandemic grievances, from lingering anger over lockdowns to a belief that he deserves personal blame for the pandemic and the more than one million Americans it killed. Democrats called the Senate hearing a "show trial."

In a brief opening statement, Dr. Fauci lashed out at Rand Paul, a Republican senator from Kentucky who chairs the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, for his "unhinged obsession with me."

"The sole reason he is calling me before this committee is to get me to say something – anything – that could vindicate his repeated public pledges that I end up, in his words, 'behind bars,' " he said.

Before leaving office last year, U.S. president Joe Biden issued Dr. Fauci a preemptive pardon for the work he had done.

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ALASTAIR GRANT/ ASSOCIATED PRESS

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PM rules out using energy as leverage in trade talks with the U.S.

ADRIAN MORROW WASHINGTON
MARIEKE WALSH OTTAWA
MATTHEW SCACE RED DEER, ALTA.

Prime Minister Mark Carney is ruling out restricting Canada's oil and gas supply to the U.S. in the face of President Donald Trump's expanding trade war, removing a potent bargaining chip as Ottawa seeks a deal with Washington.

Mr. Carney's government is also planning to scrap a tax on online streaming services such as Netflix and Amazon Prime, the latest in a series of concessions to U.S. trade demands for which Canada has not received anything in return.

Dominic LeBlanc, the Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. trade, is in Washington this week, where he met with U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer and attended a social event co-sponsored by the Canadian government and major U.S. tech companies.

Speaking to reporters in Red Deer, Alta., on Wednesday, Mr. Carney said he didn't "see the value" of putting energy exports, such as Alberta's oil, on the table in trade talks.

"Canadians are reliable," he said. "One of the biggest commodities, arguably the best, is trust. People trust us, and so, when you're a supplier of a key commodity, key service, you've got to think really hard about not supplying."

ENERGY, A15

RCMP pledge to support Belgian police as they probe NATO intern

MARIE WOOLF OTTAWA

The RCMP says it will support Belgian authorities investigating a Canadian intern of Chinese origin alleged to have engaged in espionage at NATO's operational headquarters in Belgium.

The intern, working at NATO's operational base, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), in Mons, near the French border, was arrested last week on suspicion of spying on behalf of a third country, and is being held in pretrial detention.

The federal government declined to comment Wednesday on whether the suspect had been working as a civil servant in Ottawa after reports in European Union media said that she had worked for Canadian government departments.

Before starting her NATO internship, she had been granted security clearance by the Canadian government after vetting by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service and a criminal record check by the RCMP.

In a statement Wednesday, the RCMP said it does not provide advice or recommendations "related to an individual's employability or security status" and final decisions about security clearance "remain the responsibility of the requesting organization."

"The RCMP is aware of a Canadian citizen being detained by Belgian police. The RCMP remains committed to working closely and maintaining strong relationships with our domestic and international partners," added Andrew DiRienzo, an RCMP spokesperson.

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SECRET CANADA Explore our national database of freedom of information requests SecretCanada.com

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PODCAST

Jeff Gray explains the latest failed effort to expand Toronto's downtown airport

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TARRALIK DUFFY'S CARNATION

TARRALIK DUFFY, CARNATION, 2020, SIX PRINTS FROM A DIGITAL DRAWING, 38.7 X 28.6 CM EACH. PURCHASE, 2022. ART GALLERY OF GUELPH COLLECTION. PHOTO BY TONI HAFKENSCHEID

Throughout July, we are showcasing artworks from the Art Gallery of Guelph, one of Canada's premier cultural spaces. Spanning historical and contemporary art, AGG is home to more than 11,000 artworks and the largest sculpture park at a public art museum in Canada. The collection brings together diverse artistic voices from across Canada and beyond, from early acquisitions by Tom Thomson and members of the Group of Seven to contemporary works by First Nations, Métis and Inuit artists. artgalleryofguelph.ca

Tarralik Duffy is an Inuk artist, writer and curator from Salliq, Nunavut, whose work combines humour, storytelling and everyday observation. *Carnation* references a staple household product in Northern communities, one of many familiar items from her childhood that Duffy transforms within her practice. Through drawing, printmaking and soft sculpture, she reflects on domestic spaces, family, memory and contemporary Northern experience, reimagining everyday objects in playful and culturally resonant forms.

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The U.S.-Saudi nuclear deal risks unleashing a Middle Eastern arms race A11

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Alona Vasylieva found her footing in a small community after years in airline service A13

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With audits, the law supplies the test but your evidence tells the full story B8

CORRECTIONS

The subheadline accompanying a Wednesday Report on Business article about Terminal Technologies Inc. incorrectly stated the company's reported valuation increased fivefold since it received seed financing in 2013. The seed financing occurred in 2023.

A Monday letter to the editor about the Gordie Howe bridge deal incorrectly stated that interest payments are considered operating expenses, and amortization considered a cash expense for accounting purposes. As neither is true, the premise of the letter is flawed.

Because of an error in the data provided to The Globe, the article text and two charts in a Monday Report on Business article about Canadian chief executives' 2025 compensation incorrectly cited RB Global Inc. CEO Jim Kessler as Canada's second-most highly paid executive in 2025. He was the fourth-most highly paid CEO, with total pay of $30.1-million in 2025. Shopify CEO Tobias Lütke was the second-most highly paid. An updated version of the article and charts can be found at tgam.ca/CEOcomp.

CLARIFICATION

In Saturday's Report on Business section, a photograph of the site of the private Dock conference in Muskoka, Ont., was not clearly identified. The photo depicted Ferndale, the private estate of Peter Gilgan.

The Globe and Mail is committed to maintaining the highest ethical, legal and editorial standards.
SANDRA E. MARTIN, STANDARDS EDITOR, standardseditor@globeandmail.com

Lost wedding ring found in Nova Scotia lake by metal detector operator

DEVIN STEVENS HALIFAX

When Louisiana's Jeff Daglaris lost his wedding ring at the bottom of a Nova Scotia lake, he turned to the internet for advice and the answer was simple: Call Nate McLagan.

Mr. McLagan has been metal detecting for about two decades. This year he's set a goal to find missing items for 25 people and word is getting out.

The weapons tech in the Royal Canadian Navy says he has received a lot of requests about lost wedding rings, and he enjoys being able to complete those types of assignments.

"As soon as I give the ring back, they actually fall down on the ground. Like, so many tears and tears of joy … It's overwhelming," he said in an interview.

Mr. Daglaris was in Nova Scotia to take a course. On a weekend in June, he and his friends were kayaking around an island in Kejimkujik National Park, about 130 kilometres west of Mr. McLagan's home in the Halifax suburb of Eastern Passage. They were climbing up rocks and jumping in the water when Mr. Daglaris's 14-karat gold wedding band slipped and fell into the lake.

"I was a little, honestly, disappointed in myself because right before I got in the water, I was like, 'Maybe I should take this off and put it in our dry bag,' " Mr. Daglaris said in an interview.

Nate McLagan emerges from a lake in Nova Scotia's Kejimkujik National Park earlier this month with Jeff Daglaris's wedding ring, which he lost while jumping in the water. THE CANADIAN PRESS

The ring had barely left his finger since he married his wife, Taylor, 3½ years ago. He and his friends tried diving for it, but the water was too dark and they had no equipment. Mr. Daglaris tagged the location on his phone, took pictures and searched the internet. That's when he fired off a message to Mr. McLagan.

The next weekend, armed with his metal detector, dive gear and some photos of rocks in a lake, Mr. McLagan made the two-hour drive and kayaked out to the island.

"And right as I was at the Halifax airport about to get on the plane, he sent me a picture with my ring," Mr. Daglaris said.

Mr. McLagan said it took only a few minutes to find the band. He said he was all smiles when he brought it to the surface.

Mr. McLagan said he treats his recovery missions as a hobby and is mainly volunteering his time to help people who contact him. If he has to go out of his way, he said he will accept some money, mostly to cover expenses for things like gasoline.

Mr. McLagan found 13 lost objects last year, and wants to hit 25 this season.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ballistics tests help secure guilty verdict in case of Canadians murdered in Dominica

Daniel Langlois and Dominique Marchand, who were killed in 2023, were renowned for their philanthropic efforts

PATRICK WHITE

Two key witnesses and forensic ballistics secured the convictions of two American men found guilty on Tuesday in the 2023 murders of a prominent Quebec couple, prosecutors in the Caribbean island nation of Dominica said as they prepared for an expected appeal.

A jury found Jonathan Lehrer and Robert Snyder Jr. guilty of murdering Montreal entrepreneur Daniel Langlois and his partner, Dominique Marchand, who were renowned throughout Dominica for funding philanthropic efforts and constructing a luxury resort.

The trial started on July 1 under a blanket gag order that blocked public reporting on the proceedings.

With the order now lifted, special prosecutor Keith Scotland said ballistics tests provided the clinching evidence in his favour. "They took two spent bullets out of the body of Daniel Langlois and linked it to the gun of Jonathan Lehrer," he told The Globe and Mail. "That was damming evidence."

Lawyers for the convicted men did not respond to interview requests.

The couple's burned remains were discovered on a remote road on Dec. 1, 2023, touching off an extensive police investigation and prosecution that taxed the nation's limited justice resources before culminating on Tuesday in a courtroom in Roseau, the capital of Dominica.

A jury took two hours to deliberate. Video from local media shows the prosecutors exiting the courthouse to cheers of "Good job" from a small group of locals celebrating the decision.

Early on in the investigation, police theorized that Mr. Langlois and Ms. Marchand were shot in their Nissan somewhere around Bois Cotlette, a cocoa farm owned by Mr. Lehrer. They believed the killers had then driven the Nissan to a mountain road and torched the car with the bodies inside before pushing it off a cliff.

The Canadian businessman and the American cocoa farmer had been entangled in a long-running legal battle over a road that bisected Bois Cotlette and served as the main thoroughfare to Coulibri Ridge, Mr. Langlois's luxury eco-resort that opened in 2022 and brought much-needed tourist dollars to the hurricane-battered nation of roughly 72,000 people.

Public opinion tended to side with Mr. Langlois, who had founded and sold a pioneering 3-D animation company in Quebec, renowned for working on the likes of *Jurassic Park* and *Titanic,* before bringing his considerable fortune to Dominica in the late 1990s.

After Hurricane Maria devastated the island in 2017, Mr. Langlois launched an organization called Resilient Dominica, which paid for a school lunch program, provided solar-powered lights for students, funded the reconstruction of a primary school and built a jetty for disaster evacuations.

Shortly after the arrests, locals told The Globe they had little faith in Dominica's justice system to hold the case together, and worried about Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit intervening on behalf of Mr. Lehrer, who was involved in a government Citizenship by Investment program that granted passports to foreign investors.

Mr. Skerrit's government brought in an off-island special prosecutor, Mr. Scotland, a prominent lawyer and member of Parliament from Trinidad and Tobago, to pursue the case.

"We put a great deal of resources into this matter from the time that the individuals were charged," Sherma Dalrymple, Dominica's director of public prosecutions, said in an interview. "We did it speedily, we did it properly and we were very much committed to getting a conviction."

Ms. Dalrymple said testimony from two witnesses formed the backbone of their case, placing the Americans around the crime scene at the time of the slayings.

The first was Norville Williams, a Bois Cotlette employee who was at the scene when the Quebec couple was shot in their car, according to Ms. Dalrymple. His testimony placed Mr. Lehrer at the shooting and gave circumstantial evidence that he drove to the secondary scene, she said.

The second was a German hiker who happened to be at both scenes and testified about an encounter with Mr. Snyder on the road, Ms. Dalrymple said.

A jury trial is the only option under Dominican law. Both Ms. Dalrymple and Mr. Scotland said they anticipate an appeal, which would be adjudicated by a three-judge panel.

"They usually appeal in these cases, but we are sure that we can defend an appeal in this matter," Ms. Dalrymple said.

Sentencing has been scheduled for September.

Neil Suter, a Canadian construction manager who worked on Coulibri Ridge and befriended the couple, said he will only feel a sense of relief if the appeals process upholds the convictions.

Mr. Suter said the deaths of Mr. Langlois and Ms. Marchand continue to leave a hole in the country.

"What they did in Dominica was truly amazing," he said. "And it just can't be replaced in Dominica. They were down-to-earth, amazing people."

Rescuers in Japan comb through earthquake rubble as death toll rises

MARI YAMAGUCHI KUMAMOTO, JAPAN

Workers walk past a damaged and partially collapsed house in Yatsushiro, Kumamoto prefecture, on Wednesday, the day after an earthquake struck southwestern Japan. YUICHI YAMAZAKI/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Soldiers and emergency workers combed through a badly damaged shopping mall and collapsed houses looking for trapped survivors Wednesday after a powerful earthquake that killed at least 18 people, including a foreigner, in southwestern Japan.

The magnitude 7.1 earthquake that hit a day earlier in the Kumamoto area on the southern main island of Kyushu also left at least 62 people injured, six of them seriously, the prefectural government said. The tally has been steadily growing, fanning fears it may continue to rise.

Some of the most serious damage was at the Aeon Mall shopping centre in the town of Kashima, which was bustling with thousands of people when the quake happened. The company said some 3,000 customers were evacuated to a parking lot before a gas explosion happened in another part of the mall, where some people were still working.

Fumika Ono was shopping at a mall with her older sister when the ground shook so fiercely she lost her balance and ducked. Children began screaming and goods scattered on the floor.

The 19-year-old was among the crowd of shoppers who managed to escape safely.

The sweltering weather heightened worries about the survivors as rescuers braved the heat. It remained unclear how many people might still be missing.

The mall's second floor collapsed, trapping people. Witnesses said the explosion shook the area as much as the quake.

Three people remained missing, while four deaths were confirmed at the mall site, according to Aeon president Akio Yoshida.

"We take it seriously that an explosion happened and precious lives were lost," Mr. Yoshida told a news conference in Kumamoto, where he bowed deeply along with two other executives.

Japanese media footage of the mall showed that part of the ceiling had caved in, and metal pieces and other debris were scattered about as helmeted and masked rescue workers searched the area.

Kiyoshi Matsunaga, 74, who lives in the mall's neighbourhood and was at a supermarket just a few blocks away, said Tuesday's quake reminded him of a deadly quake 10 years ago that hit Kumamoto and killed 50 people.

He stopped in his tracks when the shaking began while he was pushing his cart toward a cash register. Things scattered from the shelves. He could not move, he recalled.

"I was frightened," he said.

Japan is one of the most quake-prone nations in the world.

In the Nuyamazu district, a pair of temple gates at a 16th-century Buddhist temple collapsed. They had just been repaired five years ago.

Yuki Kiyozumi, deputy chief priest at the temple, recalled how she had to crawl on the floor because the shaking was so violent. She had just returned home from a meeting and was about to feed her cat.

"I don't even know if or how we can rebuild them again," she said, while cleaning up damaged ornaments and furniture.

In nearby Yatsushiro, a chimney collapse at a Nippon Paper Industries factory killed five people while seven others were rescued from the debris, according to the Kumamoto prefectural government disaster team.

Four people were still believed to be trapped there, it said.

In the first reported death of a foreign national, a Vietnamese technical intern was killed after a crane fell on him at a factory where he worked, according to the Vietnamese government. He had arrived in Japan in January. Seven other Vietnamese technical interns at the factory evacuated safely

Separately, a Vietnamese woman married to one of the workers was injured when a wall collapsed and was being treated at a hospital.

Nearly 34,900 homes were still without electricity and some 15,000 homes without running water, Kumamoto officials said. More than 8,800 people left their homes to stay in over 400 shelters, where power sources were being added to provide air conditioning.

Aerial police footage showed some homes in residential areas were completely flattened, including a few that crumbled into a nearby river.

Japan's Self Defense Forces joined rescue workers in the search and rescue operations. Hundreds of professionals were helping with the effort, including firefighters from Taiwan.

"There are people who are still waiting to be rescued, and it's a race against time," Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi said. "We will go all out to find and rescue as many people as we can."

Ms. Takaichi said the government was preparing to deliver food and other necessities to hard-hit areas. She also offered her condolences to the victims and sympathy to their relatives, while urging those affected by the quake to take care of themselves under the hot weather.

Bullet train services remained suspended. Although operations at Aso Kumamoto Airport resumed Wednesday, some airlines cancelled flights as a precautionary measure.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Missing 11-year-old boy found dead, Calgary Police say

MATTHEW SCACE CALGARY

Calgary Police say an 11-year-old boy who has been missing since July 16 – and whose disappearance sparked a massive search by officers and community members – has been found dead.

Calgary Police Chief Katie McLellan said the boy, Parker, was discovered on Wednesday afternoon deep in a network of pipes near one of the city's major expressways after a citizen discovered his shoes at the mouth of a culvert near an industrial park in the city's northeast.

"For nearly two weeks, so many people woke up hoping it would be the day Parker came home," Chief McLellan told reporters at a late-afternoon news conference at Calgary Police headquarters.

"Instead, we are here sharing news that is heartbreaking for his family and for everyone who has been carrying that hope."

Police said they have called off their search.

The news marked a tragic conclusion to the sweeping search that began when the 11-year-old left what police described as his "day home" and never returned.

Since he disappeared, police had maintained foul play was unlikely and, on Wednesday, they said that they still believe he wandered off on his own volition. Parker was neurodivergent and non-verbal. "Parker experiences the world in his own way," his family wrote in an unsigned statement previously disseminated by police.

Hundreds of police officers and thousands of Calgary residents had been searching for clues ever since he vanished. Investigators struggled to track down CCTV evidence of his most recent whereabouts and Calgary Police committed more than 400 officers to the search.

The police service had deployed aerial support, canine resources, mountain bike patrols, patrols on horseback and extensive searches of nearby waterways and railways. On the third day after Parker's disappearance, police cruisers crawled through neighbourhoods playing Disney tracks from movies he loved, such as *Frozen*'s *Let it Go,* in their bid to get his attention.

Meanwhile, thousands of residents scoured neighbourhoods, creeks and parks for the boy and any evidence of his whereabouts. In the northeast Calgary neighbourhood where he was last seen, volunteers gathered in parking lots to strategize where they should search, and a group of locals banded together to create an organized effort to find him.

Chief McLennan said police on Tuesday received a tip from a citizen saying they'd discovered a pair of shoes at the mouth of a culvert on the west side of Deerfoot Trail, a major expressway that runs north to south through Calgary.

The shoes resembled those Parker was last seen wearing, she said.

Calgary Police Sergeant Rich Wall said the clue pushed officers to continue down the pipe, leading them to the other side of Deerfoot Trail. That culvert, about four feet wide, split into a series of smaller pipes – between two and three feet wide – was where the boy was discovered at roughly 2:30 p.m. Wednesday afternoon, he said.

Sgt. Wall said the body was discovered between 450 and 500 feet into the pipes. The Calgary Fire Department's aquatic team was pulled in to safely retrieve the body, he said.

"We're relieved to be able to bring Parker home … we are very deflated in the fact we couldn't find him alive, but relieved that we found him," Sgt. Wall said.

Chief McLellan said: "Parker's family is asking for privacy as they navigate this profound loss."

She thanked the thousands of Calgary residents who searched for the boy. She said Parker's family knew they were not alone in the search for their boy.

"Behind every search map, every briefing, every tip and every hour spent looking was a little boy who was deeply loved by his family."

Ukrainian strike on Iranian cargo ship blurs line between two wars

Tehran climbs down from threat to retaliate, a rare bit of good news as pair of conflicts threaten to merge

MARK MacKINNON
SENIOR INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENT
LONDON

ANALYSIS

It could have been the start of World War Three. For now, the Ukrainian drones that struck an Iranian ship in the Caspian Sea on Saturday have only further blurred the line between the world's two big continuing wars.

The worst-case scenario almost unfolded in recent days, as Iran – according to a report in The New York Times – prepared to retaliate by launching a ballistic missile at an unnamed Ukrainian port city. It now seems that Iran's leadership, which initially declared on social media that the Ukrainian strike "CANNOT GO UNANSWERED," has been persuaded to seek another form of retribution.

The climbdown was a rare ray of good news (albeit one followed hours later late Tuesday ET by Iran launching a surprise missile attack on U.S. bases in the Middle East, ending several days of relative calm). Few could predict what would happen next if Iran launched one or more missiles toward a city in Europe.

The war in Ukraine and the struggle in the Middle East have been intertwined since early in the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Tehran began supplying Moscow with the first batches of the Shahed explosive drones in the fall of 2022. The buzzing Shaheds have terrorized Ukrainian cities on a near-nightly basis ever since.

The two conflicts have burned dangerously closer together over the five months since the start of the U.S.-Israeli war against Iran. Russia has reportedly provided its ally Iran with intelligence and satellite imagery to aid its targeting of U.S. military bases around the Middle East. Ukraine has sent its homegrown anti-drone systems, and teams of experts, to help bolster the air defences of the Gulf Arab states and other U.S. allies in the region.

More than any other party, Ukraine would probably welcome a widening of the conflict. After almost four and a half years of fighting the larger Russian army on its own, gaining the United States and Israel as allies would represent a strategic success for Kyiv, which already sees Iran (along with North Korea, which has sent soldiers and artillery shells to aid the Russian invasion) as an enemy state.

It would also fit with Ukraine's perception of what the two wars are about. The Globe and Mail visited Kyiv in late 2023, shortly after the Middle East was set on its current course by the Oct. 7, 2023, attacks by Hamas – an Iranian-backed Palestinian militia – on southern Israel.

One of the officials The Globe met with was Mykhailo Podolyak, then a key voice in Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's office. Mr. Podolyak discussed the horrors of Oct. 7 and the war that had just begun in Gaza – which he predicted would divert the world's attention away from what was happening in his country. The Globe probed Mr. Podolyak for his feelings on the wider Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Did Ukraine share common cause with the Palestinians (as in the Palestinian Authority, not Hamas) in seeking to end a military occupation, and looking for the world to uphold international law?

Mr. Podolyak recoiled at the idea. Ukraine had nothing in common with the Palestinians, he said. Ukraine saw itself the same way Israel did – as a lonely democracy, with dangerous, authoritarian neighbours. Now was the time to fight and destroy those neighbours, he said, or else the cycle of violence would continue indefinitely.

Ukraine has remained one of the most pro-Israel states in the world through the years of war in Gaza, Lebanon and Iran – and it has all but confirmed that it intentionally targeted the Iranian cargo ship on Saturday, an attack that killed one sailor.

Yevgen Korniychuk, the Ukrainian ambassador to Tel Aviv, told Israel's Channel N12 on Sunday that the Iranian vessel was a legitimate military target because it was carrying missile and drone parts bound for Russia. "This is not the first time we've struck military targets like these, and of course you can expect us to strike them again," Mr. Korniychuk said, adding that Ukraine and Israel were fighting "the same enemy and different sides of the same axis of evil."

It's language that has been used before to divide the world into blocs, into groupings of countries that are either "with us" or "with them." And if Iran had taken the bait and launched a direct attack on Ukraine, it would have erased many of the qualms that Canada, the European Union and other countries have about U.S. President Donald Trump's war against Iran.

An Iranian strike on Ukraine, particularly one that caused significant civilian casualties, could conceivably have forced Canada and the EU to more firmly pick sides. The world could well have found itself divided between the "axis" Mr. Korniychuk referred to, and those who oppose it – with both sides possessing large nuclear arsenals. China would have to assess how far its "no limits" partnership with Russia really goes.

As of Tuesday, when Mr. Trump held White House meetings first with Mr. Zelensky and then, separately, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, that hadn't happened. There was no public talk of an alliance to counter the Moscow-Tehran "axis."

Instead – after what The New York Times described as "a flurry of diplomacy" – Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andriy Sybiha held an emergency phone call with his Iranian counterpart Abbas Araghchi. Mr. Sybiha later posted on social media that Ukraine "never intended to target civilian vessels or people." Mr. Araghchi switched from threatening attacks to talking about "restitution for losses."

In other words, cooler heads prevailed – and the wars in Europe and the Middle East continue to burn separately. For now.

Security forces and emergency personnel work at the site of a strike north of al-Miqdadiyah district in Iraq's Dayala province on Wednesday. U.S.-Saudi strikes on Iraq that same day killed at least 20 members of a former paramilitary alliance that includes pro-Iran groups. YOUNIS AL-BAYATI/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

U.S. launches retaliatory strikes on Iran after attack on American base

QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA
KONSTANTIN TOROPIN BAGHDAD

The U.S. military said Wednesday that it launched strikes on Iranian targets in response to Tehran's attack on American forces in the Middle East. The latest barrage came after the U.S. partnered with Saudi Arabia to strike Iran-backed militias in neighbouring Iraq, killing at least 20 fighters and six Iranian advisers.

The new strikes on Iran are "a powerful response to yesterday's attempted Iranian attack" U.S. Central Command said in a post on social media Wednesday evening.

U.S. President Donald Trump had vowed to retaliate after Iran targeted a base in Jordan that hosts U.S. troops.

Elsewhere, drone strikes ignited fires on two natural gas vessels at the Egyptian port of Damietta, according to Ambrey, a British maritime security firm. It was not immediately clear who was responsible for the strikes on a U.S.-owned floating storage facility and a Greek-owned tanker. No injuries were reported.

The flare-ups on multiple fronts after several days of relative calm raised the risk of a return to all-out war. It also underscored the difficulty of winding down a five-month conflict that has jolted the world economy and is unpopular among Americans. The fighting was also likely to add to concerns that the U.S. is further drawing down already diminished stockpiles of sophisticated munitions needed to defend its bases and allies.

Egypt, a close U.S. ally and regional mediator, is one of the only countries in the Middle East to have been spared direct military action during the war. A strike by Iran or its allies, if confirmed, would mark a significant widening of the conflict.

Asked during an Oval Office event if Iran was responsible for the strikes on the natural gas vessels, Trump responded: "It's a little more of the same."

"It's going to be straightening out," he added. "In the meantime, we're going to be hitting them very hard because it's our turn to hit them. They know it's coming. They're asking us not to do it."

Saudi Arabia had accused the Iraqi militias of firing drones against its oil facilities over the past two days. An umbrella group of Iraqi militias initially denied the allegations, while another Iran-backed group – the Houthi rebels in Yemen – said they had attacked Saudi energy facilities as part of a separate but related conflict.

Before the latest eruption, mediators had expressed optimism about bringing the U.S. and Iran back to the negotiating table. An interim agreement collapsed in recent weeks over renewed fighting in the Strait of Hormuz, a crucial waterway for global energy supplies that Iranian attacks have again effectively closed.

A regional official said mediators are "still trying with both sides" to restore calm and get the ceasefire back on track. He gave no details on whether progress was being made and spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the closed-door diplomacy.

Regional countries will continue to push to de-escalate the situation, said an Arab official, adding that prospects for successful mediation were slim as both sides continue to launch attacks on the other and have shown no inclination to stop. "We're in a very bad place right now," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to describe an internal assessment of the situation.

The renewed hostilities sent oil prices spiking. Brent crude, the international standard, jumped 7.3 per cent to US$88.093 a barrel.

Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard said it fired ballistic missiles at Jordan's Muwaffaq Salti Air Base, a key U.S. military hub for the region, in a statement carried by the state-run IRNA news agency.

Jordan's military said five Iranian missiles had been intercepted and destroyed. There were no immediate reports of casualties or damage.

The U.S. military later announced that American and Saudi fighter aircraft had struck multiple logistics and weapons sites in eastern Iraq in response to the alleged drone attacks on Saudi Arabia. The Saudi Defense Ministry warned that it "does not seek escalation but will respond to any aggression."

The Popular Mobilization Forces, a coalition of primarily Shiite Iranian-backed armed groups that is officially under the command of the Iraqi military, said at least 20 fighters were killed and 32 wounded in the overnight strikes. Six Iranian advisers were also killed, according to two Iraqi militia officials, who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to comment publicly. Iran's deputy governor for political, security and social affairs in Markazi province told Iranian state media that four advisers were killed.

The coalition joined the fight against the Islamic State group after it seized large sections of Iraq in 2014.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ukraine hits two major Russian oil refineries as Kyiv intensifies pressure on Moscow

HANNA ARHIROVA
BARRY HATTON KYIV

Ukrainian forces hit two of Russia's biggest oil refineries overnight in its latest long-range strikes, officials said Wednesday, as Kyiv deepened its economic, military and diplomatic pressure on Moscow.

Ukraine's almost daily long-range drone and missile strikes using domestically developed weapons have battered Russian oil facilities for months. The operation has brought a fuel crisis that is embarrassing the Kremlin more than four years after Russia's all-out invasion of its neighbour.

The overnight attacks started fires at a Lukoil refinery in Russia's Perm region, more than 1,500 kilometres from Ukraine, and a refinery in Ryazan, about 400 kilometres from the border, Ukraine's Security Service and General Staff said in separate statements.

The refineries have a combined annual production capacity of around 220 million barrels of oil, according to Ukraine, and make a vital contribution to Russia's military effort and its government revenue.

It was not immediately possible to independently verify the claims. Ryazan Governor Pavel Malkov said only that six people were taken to hospital after a drone attack. He said drone debris caused fires at unidentified "industrial sites."

Russian online retailer Wildberries, a major supplier likened to Amazon that Ukraine has targeted in recent days, said it evacuated employees from a facility in Ryazan but provided no further details.

Russia has sophisticated air defences but its vast territory is hard to comprehensively cover.

The attacks came hours after President Volodymyr Zelensky visited Washington on Tuesday for talks with U.S. President Donald Trump to push for more vital American help for Ukraine's fight against its much bigger enemy.

"Russia must feel that every day of this war will only come at a higher cost for it. We need to weaken the aggressor and keep up the pressure to bring an end to this war closer," Mr. Zelensky said on social media.

Ukraine's recent high-profile successes against Russia have impressed Washington and helped restore U.S. goodwill after Mr. Trump's reluctance at the start of his second term to keep supporting Kyiv. That stance had raised the spectre of Ukraine and Europe having to stand up to Russian aggression alone.

Mr. Zelensky said he had a "good meeting" with the American President, and Mr. Trump described the meeting as a "Great Honor." The talks took place behind closed doors.

"Many things were discussed. The meeting went very well!" Mr. Trump wrote on Truth Social.

Mr. Zelensky said he also had a meeting in Washington with representatives of both parties in the U.S. Senate, with more than 60 senators in attendance, as Ukraine pushes for more sanctions on Russia. He also met with representatives of Lockheed Martin, days after he welcomed a delegation from Raytheon to Kyiv.

The U.S. weapons manufacturers are a crucial source of sophisticated weaponry, such as Patriot air defence systems, that Ukraine hopes to make itself. Mr. Trump said earlier this month he would grant Ukraine licences to manufacture the Patriots it needs to counter Russia's ballistic missiles.

Mr. Zelensky says Ukraine is discussing joint production and technology exchange with both Lockheed Martin and Raytheon.

Ukraine is ready to share its cutting-edge – and battle-tested – drone technology. Its swift technical innovation has paid dividends as it helps pin down Russia's bigger army on the front line and denies it supplies by hitting rear areas.

That has impressed countries around the world. Matthew Whitaker, the U.S. ambassador to NATO, said during a visit to Ukraine earlier this week: "From reconnaissance and logistics to precision strikes, Ukraine has shown the world how unmanned systems can give smaller forces a decisive edge."

Prospects for a settlement to stop the fighting appear dim, despite a year-long diplomatic push by the Trump administration.

But U.S. officials also agreed that Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, the President's main envoys, would make a trip to Kyiv sometime in the future, according to a person familiar with the talks who was granted anonymity to discuss the closed-door meeting.

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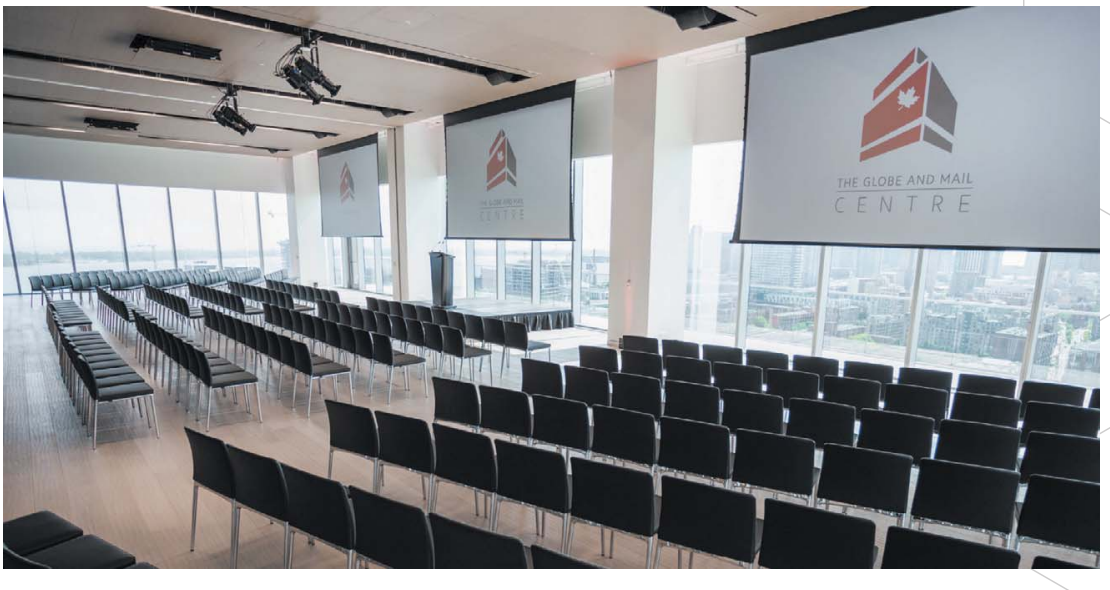


Former Conservative cabinet minister enters Toronto's mayoral race

Observers say candidacy could siphon off votes from other challenger to Mayor Olivia Chow

MATTHEW FRANK

Former federal Conservative cabinet minister Chris Alexander registered on Wednesday as a mayoral candidate at City Hall for the Toronto municipal election, which is scheduled for Oct. 26.
MATTHEW FRANK/ THE GLOBE AND MAIL

Former federal Conservative citizenship and immigration minister Chris Alexander has registered as a mayoral candidate in Toronto's fall election, pitching himself as someone who brings an outside perspective to civic politics.

Mr. Alexander, a one-term MP who represented the eastern suburb of Ajax-Pickering, served in former prime minister Stephen Harper's cabinet from 2013 to 2015.

His candidacy has the potential to shift the dynamics of the campaign, as Mayor Olivia Chow seeks re-election against Councillor Brad Bradford, a centre-right municipal politician who lost to Ms. Chow in 2023 and has widely been viewed as her strongest challenger.

Political observers say Mr. Alexander's candidacy has the potential to siphon off votes from Mr. Bradford, while benefiting Ms. Chow.

On Wednesday, Mr. Alexander arrived at Toronto City Hall with his wife and three children to sign candidate registration papers for the election, which is slated for Oct. 26. Despite his previous Tory party ties, he told reporters he's past partisan politics, and that the city needs centrist leadership to succeed.

"As democracy in Canada has always shown, it doesn't hurt and it usually helps when people from outside of a given political arena bring their expertise and their experience to bear," he said. "I'm one of those people."

Prior to his stint in federal politics, Mr. Alexander, who grew up in Toronto, served as ambassador to Afghanistan and lived in the country for six years while Canadian troops were deployed there.

In 2016-17, he ran for the leadership of the federal Conservatives. Since then, he's been a fellow of the Canadian International Council and the Macdonald Laurier Institute and has worked as a consultant.

Mr. Alexander said he decided to run to bring direction to Toronto, which he sees as being economically idle. His diplomatic and federal career offers experience in bringing people together to address "complex issues to find a solution," he said.

While Mr. Alexander said a specific platform will be public in "the coming weeks," his focus will be on housing affordability, safety and improving public transit.

The Globe reported earlier this month that former Toronto mayor John Tory offered general advice to Mr. Alexander before he decided to run.

Mr. Alexander's time in federal politics was coloured by an incident during the 2015 federal campaign, when his party proposed a "barbaric cultural practices" tip line to report incidents of honour killings, forced marriages and polygamy. Mr. Alexander lost his seat to the Liberals in that election.

Mr. Alexander, who was a key driver of the proposal, has since described it as a mistake.

"I do regret it, and I own the fact that we played that issue wrongly," he said on Wednesday.

"But I do not disassociate myself from my convictions and my values on this issue, which relates to the rights of women and girls everywhere, but especially in places like Afghanistan."

Ms. Chow wasn't available for an interview, didn't comment on Mr. Alexander and said she will speak about the election in the fall.

Mr. Bradford also wasn't available for an interview. When speaking to reporters on Wednesday about Mr. Alexander entering the mayoral race, he said "I had never heard of him," while saying that he has no concerns about vote-splitting.

He said Mr. Alexander's role in the proposed "barbaric cultural practices" tip line is concerning.

"In the most diverse city in the world, somebody who harbours those views, I think that makes you unfit for this office," he said during the scrum at Toronto City Hall.

Kelly Aizicowitz, executive director for non-profit citizens group A Better City Toronto, which has been advocating against Ms. Chow, said any vote for Mr. Alexander is one for the incumbent mayor.

She said a "two-horse race" is needed to compete against Ms. Chow.

"If Chris Alexander decides that he is going to stay in the race and continue to create distraction with no credible path to victory, that takes away from talking about the issues that are facing Torontonians," she said in an interview.

Mr. Alexander told reporters his campaign isn't based on dividing votes, and said "the votes of Torontonians aren't a pie to be split up by strategists behind closed doors."

Myer Siemiatycki, professor emeritus of politics at Toronto Metropolitan University, agreed that Mr. Alexander's entry poses challenges for Mr. Bradford's campaign because now there are two alternatives to the incumbent mayor.

"It positions Mayor Chow to really focus on her own track record and to keep highlighting the strengths of what she has been able to accomplish and achieve for Toronto in her three years in office, while Mr. Bradford and Mr. Alexander may be spending a fair amount of time going at each other."

He added that it may be difficult for Mr. Alexander to make his federal experience an advantage because he was one-term politician, which also serves as a reminder of the tip-line scandal.

Liberals block committee study on Gordie Howe bridge deal

IAN BAILEY OTTAWA

Liberal MPs stymied a Conservative effort to force detailed hearings on the deal Prime Minister Mark Carney reached with the United States on the operations of the Gordie Howe International Bridge.

Canada agreed to send the United States half of the bridge's net toll revenues for 15 years, which led to the Trump administration dropping its objections to the $6.4-billion bridge's opening.

Conservative MPs called a meeting of the House of Commons government operations and estimates committee Wednesday to urge a study of the revenue-sharing agreement, which was released in full last week.

Its release contradicted Mr. Carney's earlier description of the deal: The Prime Minister had previously said tolls would not be split with the U.S. until after Canada's debt to build the bridge was paid back. He subsequently conceded he was not as clear as he might have been in explaining the nature of the deal.

> "I do hope that this committee will treat this issue with as much seriousness as it deserves.
>
> **DAN ALBAS**
> CONSERVATIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER

The Conservatives have accused the Liberals of capitulating to the Americans, and failing to be transparent with Canadian taxpayers and businesses.

Under a Conservative motion discussed at the committee, three cabinet ministers would have been called to testify before parliamentarians about the bridge deal: Canada-U.S. Trade Minister Dominic LeBlanc, Infrastructure Minister Gregor Robertson and Finance Minister François-Philippe Champagne. The motion also demanded the release of all drafts of the agreement with the U.S., and an economic analysis of the bridge by the Parliamentary Budget Officer.

Conservative committee member Dan Albas said he welcomed the new bridge, and acknowledged challenges dealing with the Trump administration.

However, he said Canadian taxpayers are owed explanations for why the agreement was ratified and why Mr. Carney gave contradictory statements. He also called for financial modelling on the agreement to be released.

"I do hope that this committee will treat this issue with as much seriousness as it deserves and not simply be dismissed," said Mr. Albas.

Ultimately, the Liberal members of the committee voted to adjourn the meeting before holding a vote on the Conservatives' motion.

During the two hours of debate, Liberal MPs focused on the fact that the bridge is now open with attendant economic benefits for Canadians. "This is a tremendous good news story for Canada and the United States," said Hamilton MP John-Paul Danko.

Liberal MP Caroline Desrochers said she had not heard from the Conservatives on what they would have done differently given the situation with the bridge.

"How long would you have been willing to keep this bridge unopened?" she said. "This was the best course for taxpayers in the current context."

During the meeting, Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre made a brief appearance in the committee room to greet the members of his caucus, according to an Official Opposition spokesperson, but did not formally address the committee.

Moments ahead of the end of the meeting, Mrs. Desrochers noted that Mr. Poilievre had earlier been in the room for about 20 minutes, claiming he was taking time that could have been used to discuss the Conservatives' motion.

"Given that, Mr. Chair, I'd like to propose that we adjourn the meeting," she said before the adjournment vote.

Carney, Smith announce housing plan in Alberta

BILL GRAVELAND RED DEER, ALTA.

Prime Minister Mark Carney came to the Alberta heartland Wednesday to announce housing money, sit shotgun on a canola sprayer and catch an earful – at a distance – from flag-waving separatists.

Mr. Carney, with Alberta Premier Danielle Smith at his side, announced $510-million in federal funding for municipalities to build water and waste water infrastructure to support new homes.

"Strong communities start right here, they start with housing," Mr. Carney told reporters. "A home needs more than four walls. It also needs clean drinking water and a reliable sewage system."

Ms. Smith said Alberta will contribute at least one-third of eligible project costs – worth up to $428-million – for a province that has seen 600,000 more people over the past five years.

"Builders can only build when the infrastructure is there to support new communities," she said.

"A whole lot of work has to happen in the background, and literally under the ground, before the first shovel ever breaks the surface."

Ms. Smith and Mr. Carney also touted shared projects, including on energy, hashed out over multiple recent meetings together or with other premiers and leaders.

"The premier said – I think she regrets this – that she has seen more of me than her husband," he joked as Ms. Smith laughed.

He said it's the 10th time he has come back to his home province since the 2025 election win. He said the two levels of government "have shared ambitions and a shared sense of purpose and urgency to get things done."

As Mr. Carney spoke Wednesday in the hot summer sun, chants and shouts could be heard from a distant group of Alberta-flag waving separatist supporters. There were about 30 of them, kept at bay by police on bicycles.

Mr. Carney also touted trade deals, including one with China to unlock $3-billion in export opportunities for canola farmers. Later Wednesday, he saw the canola up close at Antler Valley Farm, south of Red Deer.

He was hosted by Scott McAllister and his father, Wayne. Mr. Carney climbed aboard a massive blue-coloured sprayer – a mister of nutrients and insecticides – with tires that matched him in height.

He sat beside the driver as the machine inched out of a Quonset hut.

He also got a crash course on determining the quality of canola.

It involves pouring canola into a pan and shaking it so the worst part of the grain sinks to the bottom.

"It takes a special touch," laughed Mr. Carney as he vigorously shook the pan.

"Panning for gold."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

ABOUT 10,000 FEDERAL PUBLIC SERVANTS APPLY FOR EARLY RETIREMENT PROGRAM

OTTAWA About 10,000 federal public servants have applied for the government's early retirement program, launched as part of a plan to cut the number of bureaucrats.

In December, the government began sending letters with information on the program to about 68,000 public servants who may have been eligible.

Employees as young as 50 with at least 10 years of employment and at least two years of pensionable service were eligible to apply. Successful applicants can retire with an immediate pension based on years of service, with no penalty for leaving early.

The deadline to apply passed last week and, as of Tuesday, 10,006 applications had been received.

Mohammad Kamal, spokesperson for Treasury Board President Shafqat Ali, said more than 6,855 applicants have met the eligibility criteria and that number will grow as more applications move through the review process.

The government has so far rejected just 41 applications.

Under the program, the latest possible retirement date for public servants is Jan. 20, 2027.

Rola Salem, a spokesperson for the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, said in an e-mail this month the decision to retire is a personal one and the department didn't have a specific target for early retirements.

"We will continue to support employees as they consider their options and make the decision that is right for them," he said.

In its 2025 budget, the Liberal government committed to cutting the number of public service positions by about 40,000 by April, 2029, from a peak of almost 368,000 in 2024.

The size of the public service has decreased by more than 12,600 people over the past year. Treasury Board data show there were 357,965 employees at the end of March 2025, compared with 345,282 at the end of March 2026.

About half of those jobs were casual, student and term positions within the federal government, while the others were permanent employees.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Three Greek firefighters killed as blazes spread in Europe

Major Spanish fire in the Avila and Madrid region stabilizes, allowing authorities to lift some evacuation, shelter-in-place orders

YVES HERMAN LANTON, FRANCE
NACHO DOCE EL TIEMBLO, SPAIN
LEFTERIS PAPADIMAS ATHENS

Three Greek firefighters died battling blazes during high winds on the island of Crete and the mainland as wildfires spread across Europe on Wednesday after days of devastating fires in Spain and France.

Two firefighters became trapped in the Crete blaze near the village of Krya Vrysi while they were driving between fire fronts. Another died in a separate fire in the Peloponnese region, a fire department spokesperson told Reuters.

Residents and tourists were evacuated from Krya Vrysi and other nearby villages, locals told Reuters by phone, as high winds pushed the fire out of control near popular holiday spots.

"The wind is unbelievable – you can't stand sometimes. The flames were huge, it was really scary," said resident Chrissa Gioukaki.

The flames headed southeast towards the coastal town of Agia Galini, where hotels line a hill above a small harbour. Tourists were evacuated on buses and in cars on Wednesday afternoon, said Charalampos Sevvas, owner of the Galini Mare hotel.

Earlier on Wednesday, the head of the EU's emergency response centre said that Greece and Italy were set to face a heightened wildfire risk in the coming weeks.

Europe, the world's fastest-warming continent, has endured record-breaking heatwaves this year, as human-driven climate change is intensifying the heat and drought that allow wildfires to spread faster.

Blazes have forced large-scale evacuations of people in Spain and France over the past days, scorching through forests and killing wildlife.

Spanish Interior Minister Fernando Grande-Marlaska warned of "three tough days" ahead, with strong winds and high temperatures, even as the major fire in the Avila and Madrid region stabilized, allowing authorities to lift some of the evacuation and shelter-in-place orders.

Officials meanwhile warned of another fire in the northwestern Spanish province of Zamora. They issued an evacuation order for six towns and asked about 1,000 people to shelter in place.

Spain's weather agency AEMET said temperatures were expected to reach 40 C on Wednesday in at least six regions, which have been placed on orange alert, the second-highest level.

In France, temperatures in the southwest, hit by devastating fires, were expected to rise from around 33 C on Tuesday to peak at 41 C, according to Meteo France, while dry winds in the afternoon could stoke flames.

French firefighters kept a major blaze west of Bordeaux stable overnight. And near Bordeaux's airport, which has remained open, tramway services resumed and hotels reopened. But officials warned the wildfires were far from over. The southwestern municipality of Lege-Cap-Ferret flagged several flare-ups in the area, adding that firefighters had managed to stabilize them.

In Le Temple, around 30 km away, firefighters with trucks and hoses and supported by aircraft, worked to extinguish a reigniting fire that set trees and vegetation ablaze.

"We remain vigilant of course today, considering the forecast weather conditions, with a new rise in temperatures and higher wind speeds in the afternoon," firefighter commander Matthieu Jomain told reporters earlier in the day.

The impact on the forests has been widespread. The wildfire in the Landes area west of Bordeaux, a popular tourist destination, has devastated 42,000 hectares of mainly pine trees.

Authorities have evacuated about 220,000 people, including holidaymakers and local residents, as the fire threatened the Cap Ferret peninsula on the Atlantic coast, only accessible by one road. About 60,000 people have been allowed back.

Raphael Fohanno could not believe what had happened to his parents' house in the small beach town of Biscarrosse, also hit by wildfires in southwestern France.

"It's a shock, thinking that just an hour earlier I'd been in my room and everything and now, there's nothing left," 18-year-old Mr. Fohanno said. His parents and sister had been evacuated by helicopter while he was out of the house.

From Thursday onward, danger levels in southwestern France appear likely to decrease thanks to some thunderstorms, lower temperatures and increased humidity, but will remain high in the southeast, Meteo France said.

Four people were arrested in recent days in the area, one on suspicion of stealing jewellery from evacuated houses, two for allegedly stealing food from an evacuation centre in Bordeaux, and one for pretending to be a therapist and offering paid sessions to evacuees, police said.

In Spain, while the situation had improved in the central provinces of Avila and Madrid, a blaze in eastern Castellon remained out of control after burning more than 10,000 hectares as weather conditions triggered several flare-ups.

Around 10,000 evacuated residents were still unable to return to their homes in Castellon.

But in a moment of hope, a veterinary hospital housing dozens of horses was saved from the flames in La Vilavella in the province, thanks to the efforts of locals. "Miracles exist. We have been saved!" said veterinarian Oscar Quemades.

More frequent and intense heatwaves are causing thousands of excess deaths and increasingly disrupting everyday life, from snarling road and rail travel to hindering river shipping. Highlighting the devastation wrought on the countryside and wildlife, Reuters drone footage from El Tiemblo, in Spain's Avila province, showed charred deer carcasses in a forest burnt to ashes.

A Madrid resident who gave her name as Cintia was horrified by the scene in El Tiemblo, a place she has often visited.

"We used to bring food up for the animals," she said. "And look where it is today."

REUTERS

Nuria Sanchez, from Fresnedillas de la Oliva, which is more than 40 kilometres west of Madrid, is reconsidering staying in the countryside with her daughter after the fires. MARCUS YAM/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

Spain: Town mobilizes to get prescriptions for elderly, open swimming pools for children

FROM A1

This show of solidarity was a lifeline for Nuria Sanchez, 48, and her family from Fresnedillas de la Oliva, a small municipality more than 40 kilometres west of Madrid.

Five days earlier, they complied with a government alert to prepare an emergency three day go-bag. But when they were dropped off at the shelter in Móstoles, a stranger immediately came up to her and asked: "What do you need?"

"Some random guy got me everything we asked for," she recalled of the volunteer.

Ms. Sanchez had thought her village of 1,800 people was a good place to raise her daughter, but now she is re-evaluating staying in the countryside after the wildfires. "All of Spain is burning," she said.

Just seven kilometres away from Móstoles in Alcorcón, an arts community centre was transformed into a tentative home for more than 50 people. "We didn't have beds, towels, nothing," said Alessandra Romero Guijarro, a volunteer co-ordinator at the shelter. "So we roll up sleeves up and get to work."

The first evacuees to arrive days earlier had been elderly patients from a nursing home. The town mobilized to get them prescriptions left behind in the hasty escape. Officials allocated funding to procure necessary supplies and opened the town's swimming pool for children. Local police offered rides.

Malika Toudda, 43, and her husband Rashid El Koudire, 54, had seen fires before, but never of such a destructive magnitude. The couple – originally from Morocco – fled their town of Cenicientos, at the foot of the mountains to the west of Madrid, by car, carrying with them only their Spanish and Moroccan documents.

"The clothes I can buy," Ms. Toudda said. "The papers – I don't want to go through the bureaucracy again."

Many evacuees brought their cats and dogs with them, but Ms. Toudda had to leave their dog, Kiara, and cats, Simba and Nala, behind. Their other relatives also had to fit in the vehicle. The thought of her pets potentially dying made her cry.

The couple and other relatives returned home on Wednesday to see if their house was still standing. But the fresh empanadas, fried dough, macerated peaches and chocolate cake that volunteers distributed Tuesday night helped Ms. Toudda push aside her fear. "They make you feel at home, they make you feel like a small kid because they bring the things to your hand," Ms. Toudda said.

Outside the centre, other evacuees prepared to board a large green city bus that would take them back to their homes in towns deemed safe again.

Volunteers hugged Abdul Aziz, 29, an electrician from Cadalso de los Vidrios, about 65 km west of Madrid, as he left. The father of three was anxious to know if his house was still in one piece. This was his first evacuation.

On Wednesday, he sent an update: his house was untouched. But the road home was an expanse of land scorched by fire.

NATO: Report quotes a source saying accused exhibited behaviour that went beyond a mere intern

FROM A1

"While we will continue to offer support to our international law enforcement partners, the RCMP does not comment on investigations being conducted by other countries."

A report by a European news consortium, including EU news platform Follow the Money, and Belgian national news outlet Le Soir, named the Canadian intern as Claire Z. and said she had come to the attention of SHAPE's internal counterintelligence service after exhibiting suspicious behaviour including hanging around NATO's buildings and asking questions.

SHAPE shared the information with the Belgian military intelligence service. The matter was then referred to the Belgian federal prosecutor's office, which launched an investigation.

The Follow the Money report quoted a source saying the young Canadian woman was exhibiting behaviour that went beyond that of a mere intern at NATO. According to a security official, the article said, she had been seen loitering around NATO's buildings and was frequently asking hypothetical questions about breaches of security protocols.

It said she had arrived in Mons in July, 2025, to begin her internship in SHAPE's IT department and extended her initial six-month term to a year.

The news report said Claire Z. speaks Chinese and English and was an expert in artificial intelligence. In 2022, she obtained a master's degree in computer science from a Canadian university and has written several academic papers.

"The Government of Canada, following security assessments provided by CSIS, makes the final decision to grant, deny, or revoke security clearances for Canadians seeking positions with international organizations, including NATO," said Brittany Fletcher, spokesperson for Global Affairs Canada, on Tuesday night.

It is not known on behalf of which third country the Canadian intern is alleged to have spied.

On Thursday, Belgian officers searched the suspect's home and place of work inside NATO's command centre, with support from a computer crime unit and a forensic and scientific unit, the prosecutor's office said. The suspect was arrested the next day.

Colonel Martin O'Donnell, a SHAPE spokesperson, said in a statement on Saturday that there is no indication that NATO or SHAPE operational readiness, command and control arrangements, or continuing tasks had been adversely affected.

"SHAPE continues to fulfill its responsibilities without interruption," he said in an e-mail. "NATO remains fully committed to protecting Allied personnel, safeguarding classified information, and maintaining the trust and security upon which the Alliance depends."

B.C. WILDFIRE AFFECTS WATER, POWER SYSTEMS AS CLINTON RESIDENTS AWAIT NEWS

The chair of the board in British Columbia's fire-stricken Thompson-Nicola Regional District says that for a lot of people, the wildfires burning in the area will be "one of the most traumatizing events" they'll live through.

Barbara Roden told an online meeting with about 350 people on Wednesday to reach out for help if they need it, as properties remain under evacuation order across the region, including the village of Clinton, with no timeline for residents to return.

"No matter what your experience of this fire is, whether you are someone who is finding out or is about to find out that you have lost property, whether you're someone on evacuation order who is away from your home, whether you were under evacuation alert, it is a traumatic, frightening experience," she said.

Clinton's CEO Brian Doddridge told the meeting that property owners will get calls over the next few days to inform them if their home has not survived the large Pear Lake blaze, which measures about 668 square kilometres.

Mr. Doddridge said the area's watershed has been "severely damaged" and work is being done to see what effect that has on water quality.

"We don't know the specific of what that looks like on the land yet. We are looking to get eyes on that as soon as we can," he said.

"What we do know is that is going to affect our water quality, and while we know that people don't need perfect water in order to return to their homes necessarily, we do need to know what the implications of that are for public health and for our water treatment facilities before we can start getting back in there."

Gregg Jackson, a senior field operations manager with BC Hydro, said the fire has caused "unprecedented damage" to the transmission system in the region, with hundreds of power structures destroyed, including substations and high-voltage lines.

He said they hope to have power back on to the downtown core of Clinton by later next week – as long as fire activity doesn't increase.

"To put that in perspective, we have 145 structures that are requiring replacement along that corridor and we have approximately seven kilometres of power line itself, the wires that are attached to the poles, that have to be restrung," said Mr. Jackson of the restoration efforts along Highway 97 and the village.

There are about 130 active wildfires burning across the province, including about 50 that are out of control, as the wildfire service warns of the return of a warming and drying trend this week.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

ILLUSTRATION BY DOMINIC BUGATTO

The prenup paradox:
Plenty of people say they want to sign one. Only 4% of Canadians do

Part of the legal landscape in Canada for decades, marriage contracts are intended to bring clarity and certainty, yet most Canadians are avoiding them for their expense and emotional toll

ZAHRA KHOZEMA

Sarah Baker thought getting a prenup would be relatively simple when her fiancé brought it up. Instead, it has become one of the most complicated, expensive and emotionally draining parts of planning their future.

What started as a conversation about protecting assets has stretched into two years of negotiations over clauses like how his rental properties would be treated and whether to include custody of their two dogs.

The Toronto-based tech worker and her partner, both 35, have spent nine years building a life together. They've lived together for seven years, own a home and have pets.

"We grew in the time that we've been together. It's such a mess to untangle everything that we've done," she said.

So far, Ms. Baker has spent around $16,000 in legal fees, while her partner has paid roughly $6,000 to $8,000. She'd originally budgeted less than $4,000.

The lengthy process, marked by repeated rewrites and clashing and slow-moving lawyers, has started to reshape how Ms. Baker sees her relationship. Instead of finding common ground, it's been "adversarial," she said. It feels "more like a divorce than a prenup."

Prenuptial agreements, more commonly known as prenups or marriage contracts, have been part of the legal landscape in Canada for decades. They are meant to bring clarity and certainty in the event a marriage breaks down, yet most Canadians still avoid them, often because of the very cost and emotional toll that Ms. Baker encountered.

Prenups loom large in pop culture – from reality TV shows like *Love Is Blind* and *The Real Housewives* to headlines around who would get what in a hypothetical breakdown of the much-hyped Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce marriage.

The reality is far less glamorous. A 2026 Nanos Research survey commissioned by The Globe and Mail found that of married respondents across Canada, only 4 per cent have a prenup.

Even among professionals who regularly advise clients on money, prenups remain surprisingly absent from the conversation. In his 15 years as a certified financial planner, Toronto-based Dave Giles, who works with Stonewater Financial Group under Sun Life, says not a single client has ever raised the topic with him.

He believes the gap between people wanting – and actually getting – a prenup stems from a strong "icky" stigma that surrounds them. They feel unromantic and pessimistic, especially when you're in the "everything's going to be perfect" phase of a relationship.

The results of the Globe's Nanos survey back that up, with the top drawbacks to getting a prenup cited by respondents being the emotional strain it could place on a relationship and the distrust it might introduce. Even for couples who understand the financial logic, Mr. Giles said that kind of backlash is often enough to kill the idea before it gets to a lawyer's office.

Prenups remain rare despite the prevalence of divorce in Canada. Statistics Canada data shows around 37 per cent of marriages end in divorce.

Toronto family and estate lawyer Julia Fogarty says the financial consequences of separation can be huge, with disputes over property, debt and support leading to lengthy legal battles costing couples "thousands and thousands of dollars" in fees.

A prenup is "a clear-cut way to divide up your interests" in case of separation, she says.

The legal contract is signed most often before marriage and outlines how property division, inheritances, existing assets, debts and spousal support would be handled if a couple separates. They are intended to be legally binding, but can still be contested in court depending on certain circumstances, she said. For some couples, however, the biggest obstacle isn't the doubt or discomfort – it's cost.

Harman Dosanjh, 31, and her husband Jhanan Uthayakumaran, also 31, of Markham, Ont., decided to sign a prenup before their June wedding. PETR GUBANOV

In the Globe's Nanos survey, which collected data from over a thousand adult Canadians, 11 per cent of respondents identified the high legal costs of getting a prenup as the biggest drawback. Among Canadians aged 18 to 34, that figure rose to 16 per cent.

The cost and complexity of a prenup often depend on what a couple is trying to protect and how much negotiation is required between the two parties.

In the simplest situation, where a couple wants to ensure that a home, inheritance or investment account they brought into the relationship remains separate if the marriage ends, Ms. Fogarty says it could cost anywhere from $2,500 to $4,000. If parties are unresponsive or have more complicated assets, the costs escalate.

The hope, of course, is that the upfront cost of a prenup will help avoid a far more expensive legal fight later.

While a straightforward, uncontested divorce can cost around $1,800, legal fees rise quickly once couples begin fighting over assets. A single court appearance in a contested case can cost $5,000 to $8,000, she said, while a family law trial typically starts at around $20,000 and can exceed $70,000, depending on the complexity of the dispute. When a prenup is in place, often those contested parts have been worked out ahead of time, so the divorces tend to be more straightforward and less costly.

"The upfront investment can add up, but when you compare it to the cost of [a divorce] litigation, it's a drop in the bucket," she said.

Many of Ms. Fogarty's prenup clients are those entering their second marriage or marrying later in life than previous generations, bringing more assets into the relationship than their parents did. By their 30s, many Canadians already have property, investment portfolios, pensions or expect to receive an inheritance.

But more younger Canadians are showing interest in prenups, particularly as housing becomes harder to afford and family money plays a bigger role in home ownership.

B.C.-based lawyer Aimee Schalles says the traditional image of prenups as something only older or wealthier couples need is starting to shift.

A recent study by TD Bank showed that 31 per cent of Canadians say they want their partner to sign a prenup or cohabitation agreement. Interest was especially high among younger generations, with 52 per cent of Gen Z respondents saying they wanted one.

Yet the gap between interest and action remains stark. Only 4 per cent of those polled in the TD Bank study said they had signed one – in line with the findings of the Nanos survey.

One reason that may begin to change is the growing role parents are playing in helping younger Canadians buy homes. As down payments increasingly come from family, more parents want legal assurances that those gifts or loans will be protected if a relationship ends, says Aimee Schalles.

Ms. Schalles is a co-founder of Jointly, an online platform that helps Canadians create prenups and cohabitation agreements. The service includes an educational course followed by a self-guided agreement builder and typically costs $429 plus tax.

Couples who want independent legal advice must still hire their own lawyers (and some provinces require a lawyer's involvement), but because the agreement has already been drafted, Ms. Schalles says those legal fees are typically lower than starting from scratch. In her experience, independent legal advice generally costs between $400 and $800 a person, bringing the total cost for a couple to roughly $1,600 – about half the average cost of having lawyers draft a prenup entirely on their own.

But Ms. Fogarty, who specializes in complex, high-conflict situations, cautions that presenting a drafted agreement to a lawyer does not necessarily reduce a lawyer's fees. In her experience, much of the work involved in preparing a legally binding prenup is not in drafting the document itself, but in reviewing financial disclosure and tailoring the agreement to a couple's specific circumstances.

One common scenario Ms. Schalles sees where people are turning to prenups involves couples buying their first home together, often with financial help from their parents.

"Buying a home in Canada is really a million-dollar-plus decision these days," she said. "We've definitely had parents reach out to us directly and buy a gift certificate for their kids or pay for the subscription for their children to go and do the agreement because that's a condition of them providing funds for a down payment for a home."

That was the case for 33-year-old Zahra Alam. The Mississauga, Ont.-based respiratory therapist signed a prenup with her husband, Shahzeb Jafri, 35, before their 2021 marriage. But the idea didn't come from the couple – it came from her father.

A few years earlier, Ms. Alam had purchased a condo with help from her family. Her father, who covered 20 per cent of the purchase price, wanted to ensure that contribution would be protected if the marriage ever ended.

At first, Mr. Jafri was hesitant, Ms. Alam recalled, saying when somebody hears prenup, they think you don't trust them.

But after a few conversations, Mr. Jafri agreed. The couple worked with lawyers, reviewed drafts together and signed the agreement before their *nikkah*, a traditional Islamic marriage ceremony. The process took about a month and cost roughly $500 each.

Unlike the couples facing four-to-five-figure legal bills, Ms. Alam's agreement was relatively straightforward and the lawyer she used was a family friend. Her father paid for her legal fees.

Ms. Schalles says domestic agreements may matter even more for "ordinary people" than the ultra-rich.

For younger Canadians who spend years saving for a down payment, she said, clarity around who owns what and avoiding tens of thousands of dollars in legal fees later can make "a real difference."

She added that growing interest in prenups is also driven by experience. Many people have watched friends or family go through painful separations and want to avoid the same outcome.

For all the attention paid to the cost and discomfort, Ms. Schalles argues that a prenup can offer a crucial benefit: It forces couples to have discussions they might otherwise avoid.

She said those conversations can reveal early on whether partners share similar values around financial transparency, conflict resolution and long-term planning – all of which can help couples assess whether they are truly aligned for marriage.

In the Nanos survey, 16 per cent of Canadians ranked discussing finances before committing as the top benefit of a prenup, putting it nearly on par with protecting real estate and family inheritances.

For people nervous about raising the topic, Ms. Schalles suggests approaching the conversation gently and framing it around financial transparency rather than mistrust.

Instead of treating a prenup as planning for failure, she recommends presenting it as part of building a strong foundation together – one that's rooted in openness about money and shared expectations to avoid surprises down the road.

That was one of the reasons Harman Dosanjh, 31, and her husband Jhanan Uthayakumaran, 31, decided to sign a prenup before their June wedding.

The couple, who live in Markham, Ont., first discussed the idea several years before getting engaged and neither viewed it as a sign of distrust.

"A prenup allows us to dictate our separation within our own terms as opposed to having the government or the courts decide how things should be split," Mr. Uthayakumaran said. "We took control of whatever is a choice for maybe in the future."

By the time the couple began planning their wedding, both had already accumulated assets of their own. Ms. Dosanjh owns part of a townhouse with her parents, while Mr. Uthayakumaran and his mother own the home the couple will live in after the wedding. Both also have retirement savings, investment accounts and workplace benefits.

"It's not our parents' generation anymore," Ms. Dosanjh said. "They didn't have any individual assets. Everything they built was together."

For the couple, one of the biggest advantages of creating a prenup was that it pushed them to sit down and take stock of all the assets they were bringing into the marriage. "It forced us to have practical conversations about finances," she said.

Like Ms. Alam, Ms. Dosanjh and Mr. Uthayakumaran wanted certainty around the assets that predated the relationship. For Ms. Dosanjh, that included something else: her dog, Link. "I've had Link longer than we've been together," she said. "It was very important to me that I maintain 100-per-cent custody."

Unlike Ms. Baker's two-year ordeal, their process was relatively quick and inexpensive. The couple used Jointly, the online platform co-founded by Ms. Schalles, and paid less than $500. They chose not to have separate lawyers review the agreement afterwards. They did, however, build in a provision to revisit the agreement every few years and seek legal advice as their finances became more complex.

As a legal counsellor herself, Ms. Dosanjh understands that it's a step colleagues recommend, but the costs of getting a lawyer did not feel justified for their fairly uncomplicated assets.

For Ms. Fogarty, a prenup is only as valuable as its ability to hold up if it is ever challenged in court, where agreements can be set aside if they are improperly drafted, signed under duress, or created without full financial disclosure from both parties. That's why Ms. Schalles still recommends that each partner obtain independent legal advice even when using her online platform.

After purchasing a condo in Mississauga a few years earlier, Zahra Alam was encouraged to draw up a prenup before marrying husband Shahzeb Jafri in 2021. GALIT RODAN/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

Similarly, couples might be tempted to write their own agreement and get it notarized. But Ms. Fogarty says notarization – which most family lawyers don't charge their own clients for or charge only a nominal fee – is not what makes a prenup enforceable. Requirements vary by province, but courts generally look at whether both parties fully disclosed their finances and received independent legal advice. Skipping those steps can end up costing significantly more later if couples first have to litigate whether the agreement itself is valid.

While prenups are a way to shield existing assets, Ms. Fogarty says the most difficult negotiations usually centre on future wealth, like how a future home, business growth or parental gifts will be divided if things fall apart.

This can be especially complicated for Ontario couples. Under the province's equalization system, property is not automatically split 50-50 for married spouses.

Instead, the law compares how much each person's net worth grew during the marriage, and the spouse with the greater increase may owe the other a lump-sum payment so both leave with an equal increase in wealth, Ms. Fogarty said.

Those are exactly the considerations at the heart of Ms. Baker's continuing negotiations. While she and her partner entered the relationship with similar financial means, the couple spent years building their wealth together. They share a home, hold common-law status, which impacts their taxes and eligibility for loan and medication cost relief, and work together to help each other with investments.

"It's been kind of a mess to undo this ball of yarn. You're pulling at the different areas to try to separate everything when you've already been together for so long that everything naturally is connected," she said.

"It's almost like you need a prenup before going into living together rather than pulling it up after," said Ms. Baker.

That's exactly the purpose of a cohabitation agreement. It covers the same types of things as a prenup, but for unmarried couples, said Ms. Schalles.

According to Statistics Canada, the number of couples living in common-law relationships has grown significantly over the past few decades, creating situations where couples may spend years accumulating assets together before ever discussing a prenup or cohabitation agreement. From 1981 to 2021, the number of common-law couples increased by 447 per cent, a much faster growth than that of married couples over the same period (up 26 per cent).

That said, as of 2021, marriage remained the most common type of union, with more than three-quarters (77 per cent) of couples married, and the remaining 23 per cent living common law.

In Ms. Schalles's experience, many Canadians are surprised to learn how dramatically family law differs not only between provinces, but also between married and common-law couples.

In B.C., for example, after two years of living together, the law treats you nearly the same as if you're married, she said.

Ontario operates differently. Common law partners do not automatically have the same property rights as married spouses, though they can still make claims in certain circumstances.

Ms. Fogarty says the value of a prenup – or a cohabitation agreement, for common-law couples – is often impossible to appreciate until a relationship ends.

For Ms. Baker, whose prenup negotiations remain unresolved, that logic is part of what keeps her moving forward.

But after thousands of dollars and two years of discussion, she feels too far into the process to simply walk away. "It sucks, but it is what it is at this point."

But for Rachel McIntyre, getting an agreement has been well worth it.

More than a decade ago, before her then-partner moved into the Cambridge, Ont. home she owned, Ms. McIntyre signed a cohabitation agreement. The contract, which cost roughly $3,000 and was paid for by her mother, stated that the home would remain hers if the relationship ended and that there would never be any spousal support. Her partner did not hire a lawyer to review the document before signing it, something she now regrets not pushing for.

A few years later, the couple married and the cohabitation agreement effectively started functioning as a prenup. When the relationship ended last year, the 44-year-old said it became one of the most important legal documents she had ever signed.

During the separation, Ms. McIntyre said her former partner challenged the contract, leading to a six-month legal back-and-forth that cost Ms. McIntyre $30,000.

Nonetheless, the document still proved critical. "Had I not had the agreement," she said, "I would have had to give him half the value of my house."

Ms. Schalles confirmed that the absence of separate legal counsel does not automatically invalidate an agreement in all provinces. But she was adamant that both parties "speak to someone independently so there's no allegation that someone's been pressured or that another partner's lawyer pushed them into agreeing."

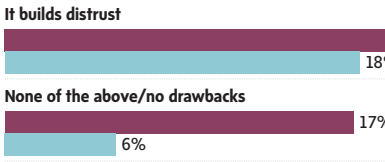
For Ms. McIntyre, the agreement offered valuable "peace of mind." Knowing that she had one "made the prospect of separating and divorcing something feasible."

Now, her advice to people considering marriage and prenups is to think beyond who your partner is today.

"People change," she said. "You will not be the same person you are today in 15, 20 years, and the person you marry will not be the same person they are today."

"You have to protect your future self," she said.

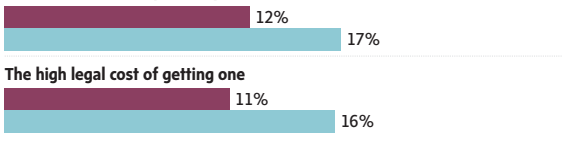
Do you have / would you get a prenuptial agreement?
Per cent of respondents


Married, no prenup 49%
Married, have prenup 4%
Common-law, no prenup 11%
Common-law, with prenup 2%
Single, would not get prenup 9%
Single, would get prenup 19%
Don't know / unsure 7%

Based on a randomized hybrid telephone and online survey of 1,003 Canadians conducted from May 3 to 6, 2026.

THE GLOBE AND MAIL, SOURCE: NANOS RESEARCH

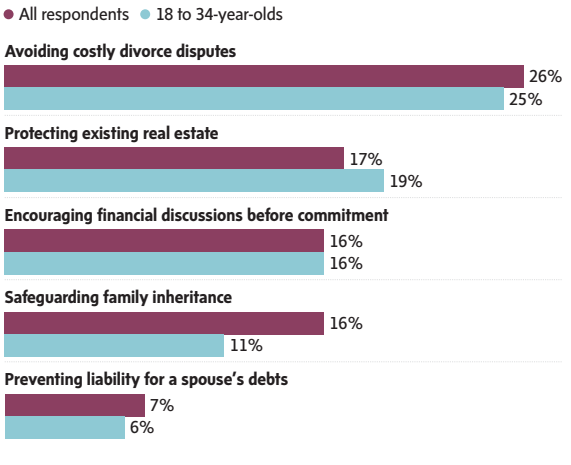
Top-ranked drawbacks of getting a prenup
Per cent of respondents


All respondents
18 to 34-year-olds
The emotional strain and arguing it could lead to 20% 26%
It builds distrust 19% 18%
None of the above/no drawbacks 17% 6%
It creates an uneven power dynamic 12% 17%
The high legal cost of getting one 11% 16%

Based on a randomized hybrid telephone and online survey of 1,003 Canadians conducted from May 3 to 6, 2026. Weighted to the true population proportion.

THE GLOBE AND MAIL, SOURCE: NANOS RESEARCH

Top-ranked benefits of getting a prenup
Per cent of respondents


All respondents
18 to 34-year-olds
Avoiding costly divorce disputes 26% 25%
Protecting existing real estate 17% 19%
Encouraging financial discussions before commitment 16% 16%
Safeguarding family inheritance 16% 11%
Preventing liability for a spouse's debts 7% 6%

Based on a randomized hybrid telephone and online survey of 1,003 Canadians conducted from May 3 to 6, 2026. Weighted to the true population proportion.

THE GLOBE AND MAIL, SOURCE: NANOS RESEARCH

EDITORIAL

ANDREW SAUNDERS
PRESIDENT AND CEO

DAVID WALMSLEY
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The subject who is truly loyal to the chief magistrate will neither advise nor submit to arbitrary measures - Junius

The PM's rhetorical fog over a bridge

It might have been the time zone. Perhaps it was the hat. It could have been Prime Minister Mark Carney's punishing schedule. Or maybe it was an unwillingness to speak clearly to Canadians.

Whatever the explanation, Mr. Carney misled the Canadian public for days when describing the deal reached with the Trump administration to open the Gordie Howe International Bridge between Windsor, Ont., and Detroit, Mich.

The opacity started with the July 10 news release announcing a side deal that would allow for the opening of the bridge, which the Trump administration had been stalling. That news release was, generously speaking, somewhat light on details, announcing "a series of cooperative measures focused on toll governance and transparency, as well as investments in the region, including through the establishment of a 15-year economic development fund tied to a portion of profits from bridge operations."

That was a change from the original arrangement in 2012, in which Ottawa would receive all toll revenues until it recouped the $6.4-billion it spent to build the bridge. (The Harper government had opted to pay the full cost of the bridge in order to get the project moving.) Only after the debt was cleared would Canada and Michigan start splitting toll revenues. The agreement noted that such payments to Michigan were not expected to begin for 50 years, at least.

Mr. Carney followed that up with a July 12 interview with CTV News in Calgary, in which he provided some more details on the side deal, the text of which had not yet been released. The deal he described seemed balanced: Yes, there would be payments into an economic development fund, but only after Canada was "paid back."

"We are sharing after Canada is paid back," Mr. Carney said (while wearing a cowboy hat at Calgary Stampede on Sunday morning – more on that in a moment). "We get the revenues. Then the servicing of the costs of the bridge, and paying the debt of the bridge. And then what's left over, there's a split of that for 15 years."

A statement from the federal government that same day said the U.S. would receive half of net profits from toll revenue, among other provisions.

Mr. Carney's answer had evolved by July 16, when reporters again asked him about the terms of the deal, which had still not been made public. Mr. Carney was asked specifically as to whether debt repayment would be subtracted from toll revenues when calculating net profits, and payments to the United States.

That is a key question: If some amount of debt repayment were included in operating costs, then the spirit, if not the letter, of the 2012 agreement would survive.

Mr. Carney's answer on July 16 was anything but clear. Nothing he said appears to be incorrect, when compared to the text of the agreement, which was finally made public on July 22. But what he avoided saying explicitly – debt repayment will not be included when calculating payouts under the side deal – was a significant omission.

The text of the agreement makes no mention of debt repayment, instead defining net revenues as "all revenues collected with respect to the bridge, less all incurred operating costs of the bridge."

On July 23, a reporter asked Mr. Carney whether he had lied on July 12, when he had said payments would be made only after debt repayment – when Canada was "paid back." What followed was the mildest of mea culpas.

"Could I have explained it better on a Sunday morning, at Stampede, with a cowboy hat on? Yes, I could have explained it better," he said, adding that he had provided a better explanation on July 16.

Mr. Carney would have Canadians believe that he had a verbal slip at an inopportune moment. But that implication, too, is at odd with the facts. His explanation four days later also avoided speaking the plain truth of the matter: Canada made concessions to get the Gordie Howe bridge opened, which will mean profits are diverted from debt repayment, and that the United States receives funds decades earlier than under the 2012 agreement.

It's not hard to see why Mr. Carney does not want to say that plain truth out loud; Canadians might be angered by so blatant a shakedown. The only thing that might make them even angrier is a Prime Minister who refuses to speak plainly to the country about that deal.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PRESCRIPTION FOR BURNOUT

Re "Burnout driving Canadian emergency room doctors to reduce hours or leave the field, new study finds" (July 27): Canada's emergency departments reveal the strengths and failures of our health system. Hallway medicine, prolonged waits and clinician burnout are not simply problems of funding or capacity. They are symptoms of a fragmented system that intervenes too late.

Patients turn to emergency departments because primary care, home care and timely follow-up have failed them. Building larger ERs will not solve this problem. Preventing unnecessary visits will.

Canada has proven solutions. Programs such as Virtual Recovery After Surgery at the Ottawa Hospital demonstrate that remote monitoring, pro-active follow-up and co-ordinated care can reduce emergency visits, shorten hospital stays and improve outcomes. Similar models can transform care for chronic disease, frailty and mental health.

The challenge is no longer innovation. It is implementation. Canada must start scaling programs that measurably improve outcomes. A learning health system, driven by transparent data and accountable leadership, offers our best path to restoring Canadians' confidence.

Daniel Dubois, MD; Ottawa

I did a brief ER orientation many years ago. Why anyone would want to work in one is beyond my comprehension. Not only are you faced with the challenge of diagnosing the patient, you have safety issues. You could be dealing with anything from a simple sprain to a heart attack to an angry patient who wants to take you out.

With some changes, this could be a much different situation. Perhaps opening psychiatric hospitals to take care of the mental health and drug addiction issues would cut out some of the physical dangers.

Leslie Martel, RN retired; Mississauga

TESTING PLAN FAILS

Re "Alberta to start allowing some privately paid medical tests this week" (July 28): Medically unnecessary tests risk harming patients. Every day I see patients who are anxious about clinically irrelevant "abnormalities" in their test results. Up to one-third of imaging tests have unimportant incidental findings. Some evidence suggests patients with back pain become worse after an MRI, because they believe the findings mean the condition is more serious than it is.

Medical radiation from CT scans may lead to downstream cancers. Overdiagnosis can lead to overtreatment, complications and psychological harm from finding things we never needed to find. Alberta's new policy of allowing patients to order their own tests may have unintended consequences.

James Worrall, MD; Ottawa

GOODBYE TO GRAHAM

Re "Zelensky, Netanyahu lobby Trump for his support as lawmakers gather to mourn Lindsey Graham" (July 29): Senator Lindsey Graham died an unrepentant war hawk. From Afghanistan to Iraq, from Iran to Ukraine, from Palestine to Syria, Mr. Graham never met a war he didn't like.

Nor did he ever appear unduly troubled by the fact that more than a million people perished in the wars that he tirelessly promoted. For Mr. Graham, the deaths of Palestinians, Iranians, Russians, Afghans and Syrians amounted to the same thing, succinctly encapsulated in his cold-blooded quip, "We're killing all the right people."

Mike Ward Duncan, B.C.

The death of Lindsey Graham marks the metaphorical demise of the Trump saga. The senator was not a fan of the President, but he supported him for the good of the country and the Republican Party. Without Mr. Graham, I believe respect for Mr. Trump will only decline as he loses his party's support and, inevitably, his legacy. There are really two funerals here: a well-liked senator's and a despised President's.

Douglas Cornish Ottawa

NO WINNERS HERE

Re "You can bet your bottom dollar on disaster" (July 29): I, too, was startled (more like depressed) when I read about the latest gambling addiction: fires and earthquakes. As if the fire isn't enough of a disaster; someone making money off it is fuel to the flames. This is human hubris and arrogance on steroids.

A better bet is investing on solutions to abate these "natural disasters." When we do that, we will be back on track. Rolling the dice on disaster only brings more disaster.

John Pentland Calgary

PAGING JONI MITCHELL

Re "Ontario accuses Ottawa of bowing to 'small fringe group' on island airport expansion" (July 29): Doug Ford and his cabinet would have us believe that the federal government bowed to "fringe groups" by not supporting the expansion of Billy Bishop airport. I call this a classic example of projection: It is Ford who wanted the airport expanded to appease his elite buddies who find it tiresome to land at Pearson and make their way downtown.

Keith Crysler Ottawa

A more appropriate headline might be "Ford caves, Carney saves." Mr. Ford caved after intense lobbying by Nieuport, airlines and business groups concerned only about their own selfish well-being.

Mr. Carney saved the day. If Mr. Ford had gotten his way we would be singing a new refrain to *Big Yellow Taxi*: "They paved paradise and put up a long runway."

Tom Driedger Toronto

Just when one thinks Mr. Ford and his government can't get any pettier, they prove they can in spades. Insulting Ontario citizens who objected democratically to the increased commercialization of open space seems low even by this current government's standards. Who paves over a body of freshwater for a runway? Where are you, Joni Mitchell?

Eve Giannini Toronto

I'm supposed to believe that 87,000-plus submissions count as a "small fringe group"? This reminds me of Premier Doug Ford describing the Greenbelt as "just a field with a bunch of weeds." The Ontario government needs to retain an optometrist and an audiologist, I think.

Mike Firth Toronto

LIVES SAVED

Re "In Montreal, kidney donors and transplant recipients help put hesitant patients at ease" (July 28): January, 2027, will mark 40 years since I received a kidney from my brother. My "new" kidney's longevity is something of a statistical outlier, which among other benefits has saved OHIP at least $4-million by my calculations. After surgery I went back to a career in high tech and resumed being a tax-paying member of society. Same with my bro.

Last year Canada was 11th in the world in terms of kidney transplantation. This year we have dropped to 14th. The incidence of living donor surgeries has remained stuck for at least 10 years. Christine and Serge's story is inspiring and engenders hope among kidney patients across Canada.

Fiona Gilfillan Ottawa

Thirty years ago, I donated a kidney to my brother. He was forty-something; I was 34. While life remained hard for him, that kidney gave him almost 20 more years – time to see his children grow up, time to flourish as a financial planner and time to be our big brother.

If you have the chance to save a life, do it.

Kim McCormick Kingston

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DEPUTY EDITOR

JAMES KELLER
NATIONAL EDITOR

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OPINION

U.S.-Saudi nuclear deal risks arms race

Industry sees a business opportunity in the Middle East

KONRAD YAKABUSKI
OPINION

As Donald Trump's war on Iran enters its sixth month, the U.S. President's main objective has clearly shifted from preventing the Islamic Republic from acquiring nuclear weapons to reopening the Strait of Hormuz.

Emboldened by their ability to humiliate another U.S. president, this time by blocking the critical international waterway, Iran's new leaders may be more committed to building a nuclear bomb than the ones they replaced.

This is the unsettling backdrop against which the U.S. Energy Department last week unveiled a nuclear co-operation agreement with Saudi Arabia that would allow American companies to sell reactors to the oil-rich Middle Eastern country for the first time.

The deal was the culmination of almost two decades of on-and-off negotiations between Washington and Riyadh, which has long sought to free up more oil for export by replacing fossil-fuel electricity-generation plants with nuclear power plants. But the agreement's announcement immediately sparked bigger fears.

Saudi Arabia's de facto leader, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, has made clear that his country would not stand by if Iran were to intensify its nuclear-weapons program.

"Saudi Arabia does not want to acquire any nuclear bomb, but without a doubt if Iran developed a nuclear bomb, we will follow suit as soon as possible," MBS, as the Crown Prince is known, said in a 2018 interview with *60 Minutes*.

While the text of last week's deal was not made public, initial reports suggested it did not include a prohibition on uranium enrichment by Saudi Arabia nor impose stringent inspection requirements of future Saudi nuclear facilities by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Nor did it make the normalization of Saudi-Israeli relations a prerequisite for the transfer of U.S. nuclear technology.

Within 24 hours of the deal's announcement, however, Mr. Trump insisted the contrary. "There will be no enrichment of material!" he wrote on his Truth Social platform, adding the agreement would be "totally subject to Saudi Arabia joining the very respected and successful Abraham Accords." That was a reference to the 2020 U.S.-brokered deals that saw the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco normalize relations with Israel.

Mr. Trump's post did nothing to reassure nuclear non-proliferation experts. The White House did not confirm whether the President's conditions were included in the legal text of the agreement. That matters, because Mr. Trump's word is not exactly his bond.

Saudi Arabia was reportedly close to a deal with the Joe Biden administration to recognize Israel in exchange for a joint defence-security agreement with Washington, but the negotiations were upended by the Oct. 7, 2023 Hamas attack on Israel that led to the war in Gaza.

The war has turned public opinion even more sharply against Israel in the Arab world, making the normalization of Saudi-Israeli relations a non-starter in Riyadh now. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's opposition to the creation of a Palestinian state has further stacked the odds against a Saudi-Israeli normalization deal.

Still, proponents of the U.S.-Saudi nuclear co-operation deal are lobbying hard to get the Trump administration to follow through on the agreement regardless of whether it includes Saudi-Israeli normalization. They point out that MBS is intent on developing nuclear power under his Vision 2030 plan to diversify the Saudi economy. It is much better, they insist, that Saudi Arabia builds reactors with American partners rather than Chinese or Russian ones. They are right about that.

More than anything, however, the U.S. nuclear industry sees a juicy business opportunity.

Pennsylvania-based Westinghouse Electric, which hopes to sell its AP1000 reactors to Saudi Arabia, called last week's agreement "a landmark step that strengthens energy security, expands opportunities for U.S. industry and workers, and drives significant long-term economic growth and investment benefits for both countries."

Westinghouse is owned by Canada's Brookfield Renewable Partners and the Saskatchewan-based uranium miner Cameco Corp. Brookfield Renewable is in turn controlled by Brookfield Asset Management Ltd., the US$1-trillion investment fund that this week announced it had raised US$2-billion from Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund and other investors for a new fund aimed at financing Middle Eastern business ventures.

"We are grateful for the collaboration with PIF and our other strategic anchor partners, reflecting the global confidence and strong demand for private equity opportunities in Saudi Arabia and the region," Brookfield Corp. chief executive officer Bruce Flatt said in unveiling the new fund, to which Brookfield is committing US$500-million.

The U.S.-Saudi nuclear deal, which would be a potential bonanza for Brookfield and Westinghouse, dovetails with efforts by Prime Minister Mark Carney – a former Brookfield vice-chairman – to deepen Canada's trade and investment ties with Saudi Arabia.

But it would also come with the risk of unleashing a nuclear arms race in the Middle East if Mr. Trump's war on Iran continues on the current disastrous path.

Will the real Marco Rubio please stand up?

RICARDO HAUSMANN
OPINION

Former minister of planning of Venezuela and former chief economist at the Inter-American Development Bank

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio waves from the top of the steps to his plane as he departs at Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Manila last week. BRENDAN SMIALOWSKI/POOL/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

On the classic American game show *To Tell the Truth*, three contestants claimed the same identity while a panel of celebrities questioned them, searching for inconsistencies. After the panelists cast their votes, the host delivered the famous request: "Will the real ___ please stand up?"

Venezuelans have been asking that question about U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio ever since American troops captured President Nicolás Maduro in January. More than six months later, they are still waiting for an answer.

There seem to be three Rubios, each with a plausible claim to being the real one. The first is the Rubio many Venezuelans thought they knew: the son of Cuban immigrants who understands what dictatorship does to countries and families.

This Rubio is supposedly fighting an uphill battle against those within U.S. President Donald Trump's administration who view Venezuela not as a democracy to be restored but as an oil field to exploit and a security problem to manage.

The second Rubio is not resisting the administration's strategy. He is implementing it, reassuring the opposition that democratic reforms will come while the United States reaches an accommodation with those who inherited Mr. Maduro's machinery, led by acting president Delcy Rodríguez. The good cop and the bad cop are thus reading from the same script.

The third Rubio, meanwhile, presides over an opaque political economy in which Venezuela's oil revenues, contracts, and institutions serve regime insiders and Washington dealmakers, turning democracy from the stated objective into the principal obstacle.

The message could hardly be clearer. Two years after Venezuelans voted overwhelmingly for opposition presidential candidate Edmundo González, only to see his landslide victory stolen, none of the prerequisites for a credible election has been put in place.

No one can still pretend that these are purely Venezuelan decisions over which the U.S. has no meaningful influence.

Most of Venezuela's export revenues flow first to the U.S. Treasury, which returns them with strings attached. Exercising a degree of control over a sovereign country that no U.S. official has wielded since Paul Bremer ran occupied Iraq, Mr. Rubio has been dubbed "the viceroy" by American and Venezuelan officials.

While the Trump administration boasts that billions of dollars in oil revenues are flowing to Venezuela, there has been no public accounting of how much has been collected or how the money has been spent.

The new government faced its first major crisis on June 24, when two massive earthquakes, measuring 7.2 and 7.5, struck 39 seconds apart, devastating Caracas and the coastal state of La Guaira.

Ms. Rodríguez has dismissed criticism of the response as a conspiracy against her government.

Nothing offers a clearer indication of the Trump administration's true intentions for Venezuela than its treatment of María Corina Machado, the opposition leader who united Venezuela's democratic movement and won the 2025 Nobel Peace Prize. When she tried to return home after the earthquakes, the Rodríguez government closed the country's airspace and threatened anyone who might help her.

The Rodríguez government did not act alone. U.S. officials forced Ms. Machado's plane to turn back, while a senior White House official dismissed her attempt to return as "grotesque political opportunism." By working with the Venezuelan regime to keep the country's most popular democratic leader in exile, Mr. Rubio undermined the "good cop" posture he had carefully cultivated.

Venezuelans in the U.S. have fared no better. The administration continues to subject them to visa restrictions, has ended humanitarian parole for 117,000 Venezuelans who entered legally with U.S. sponsors, has stripped hundreds of thousands of temporary protected status, and has kept running deportation flights to Caracas. If Venezuela was intolerable enough to justify removing its ruler, how can it be safe enough to receive the very people who fled his rule?

So which Rubio is real? The embattled defender of liberty? The good cop reassuring Venezuela's democratic opposition while the administration cuts its own deals? Or the powerful viceroy whose actions suggest that Venezuelan democracy was never more than a bargaining chip?

More announcements will surely follow in the coming months. There may be an election date, a reconstruction fund, or another gesture toward the opposition. Judge such promises only by what can be verified: political prisoners freed; an electoral authority Venezuelans can trust; a genuine voter registry; Ms. Machado home and safe; and every dollar of oil revenue accounted for. Anything short of that is theatre.

Sudan is caught in another genocide. Why isn't the world acting?

IRWIN COTLER
MUTASIM ALI
YONAH DIAMOND
OPINION

Irwin Cotler is a former minister of justice and attorney-general of Canada and founder of the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights.

Mutasim Ali and Yonah Diamond are senior legal advisers at the RWCHR.

We are bearing witness to another genocide in Sudan – atrocities that were forewarned but have been allowed to continue by global indifference and inaction.

In 2023, we were joined by leading experts in warning of the imminent risk of genocide in North Darfur, and later reached formal conclusions identifying the perpetrators in major legal inquiries and a complaint to the International Criminal Court.

Since then, Sudan has become the world's largest humanitarian catastrophe. The figures are staggering: early estimates tallied 150,000 people who have been killed amidst the world's worst hunger and forced displacement crisis. Two-thirds of the population require humanitarian assistance, and nearly half the country is suffering from acute hunger. More than 20 areas in Darfur and Kordofan are at risk of famine.

Nine months ago, as soon as the North Darfur city of El Fasher fell, the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) – the militia at war with the Sudanese Armed Forces – killed thousands of starving civilians in a matter of days, leaving bloodstains that were picked up by satellite imagery. Tens of thousands remain unaccounted for; they are dead, missing, or displaced.

The conflict in Sudan has metastasized for 39 months. The RSF and allies have relentlessly targeted non-Arab communities, including in El Fasher – atrocities the UN has characterized as bearing the "hallmarks of genocide." What's more, this is yet another genocide to occur in Darfur this century, preceded by clear signs of incitement against the same communities that were attacked two decades ago. The RSF and its allied militias are using similar tactics as in the past, including by targeting infrastructure essential for survival, such as water and power sources.

Today, with the RSF now having near-total control of Sudan's western region, every international forum, including the G7, is warning of repeat atrocities in El Obeid, the capital of North Kordofan. Yet this emergency putting hundreds of thousands at risk in El Obeid – including many who were displaced from El Fasher and journeyed across the desert – has been met with indifference.

What is clear is that the cycle of violence will continue without serious action. One would expect the mass destruction and suffering to mobilize urgent collective action, but the international community's response remains astonishingly inadequate.

The violence has persisted unchecked for so long due to the perpetrators' unrestricted access to arms, drones, mercenaries, logistical support, and financial resources from powerful external actors, enabling them to commit atrocities with impunity. The lack of political will allows these atrocities to proliferate, despite the overwhelming evidence of the actors driving the violence.

These imminent atrocities carry an obligation to act and prevent the violence from spreading even beyond Sudan's borders. As part of the G7, Canada can lead the world to fulfilling that obligation by taking simple steps toward accountability.

First, while the G7's recent call on external actors to cease supporting the warring parties is welcome, more concrete action is needed. Canada should work with allies to disrupt the supply lines fuelling the atrocities, calling out and imposing costs and targeted sanctions on external actors and entities supporting the genocidaires. The European Union's recent move targeting the gold trade, a critical driver of conflict, is instructive and replicable in this regard.

Second, Canada should leverage its influence to advance accountability at the international and regional levels, including at the International Criminal Court or the International Court of Justice, or through a special tribunal to hold those responsible to account, including for aiding and abetting atrocities.

Third, while the G7's recent call to expand the UN arms embargo is commendable, it is essential to begin collaboration with the African Union to monitor the existing UN Security Council arms embargo on Darfur.

Finally, Canada should work within all multilateral forums to promote localized ceasefires in Sudanese regions with a high risk of mass atrocities. These represent urgent, life-saving interventions that open humanitarian corridors, protect civilians, and strengthen broader peace efforts already under way.

The people of Sudan deserve our concerted action. We must work to halt these imminent repeat atrocities and protect civilians before another city is lost.

LAWRENCE MARTIN will return.

LIFE & ARTS

In praise of the courthouse wedding

As events become more expensive and exhausting, the civil ceremony offers something increasingly seductive: restraint

SADAF AHSAN

OPINION

One of the most surprising celebrity wedding images of the year did not involve a cathedral veil, a castle in the Cotswolds or a reception that looked as if it required a structural engineer.

It was Dua Lipa and Callum Turner leaving London's Old Marylebone Town Hall after tying the knot in May. The details were still celebrity-grade: Lipa wore a custom ivory Schiaparelli skirt suit with a wide-brimmed Stephen Jones hat, white gloves and Christian Louboutin pumps, inspired by Bianca Jagger's iconic 1971 wedding look.

Turner wore a dashing navy double-breasted Ferragamo suit. And yes, the couple followed it up with a three-day celebration in Sicily that most people can only dream of. But the image that has stuck is not the maximalist fantasy, but one of simplicity: A stylish couple on the steps of a town hall, surrounded by a small circle of friends and family.

Pop star Charli XCX and The 1975's George Daniel similarly made waves when they got hitched last summer at London's Hackney Town Hall. She wore a custom off-the-shoulder Vivienne Westwood minidress, Jimmy Choo slingbacks and oversized black sunglasses; he a navy Giorgio Armani double-breasted suit.

Although civil ceremonies are generally considered muted, style and personality were hardly spared at either event.

No longer a sad, bureaucratic errand on the way to something better, the courthouse wedding is making a compelling case as an intentional, emotionally focused alternative to the exhausting sprawl of contemporary weddings.

And sprawl is, indeed, the word. In Canada, even "average" weddings can be financially punishing. According to Wedding-

Singer Dua Lipa, right, and her husband, actor Callum Turner, got married this May in a civil ceremony at London's Old Marylebone Town Hall. DAILY MAIL/SHUTTERSTOCK

Wire Canada and The Knot's 2025 Global Report, the average Canadian wedding costs between $30,000 to $42,000. And they're only getting pricier, owing to the rising cost of just about everything, including vendors and venues.

There are signs that smaller weddings are no longer just an early pandemic-era compromise. In the U.S., The Wedding Report found that the average wedding guest count fell from 184 in 2006 to 131 in 2024, and celebrations of 50 guests or fewer made up 18 per cent of weddings in 2024, up from 10 per cent in 2013. According to Pinterest's 2025 Annual Wedding Trends Report, Gen Z is particularly keen on city hall and courthouse nuptials, with the platform noting a more than 190-per-cent jump in searches for "city hall elopement" by the demographic.

In any major city, the practical details alone present striking savings. In Toronto, a marriage licence costs $180, while a civic centre wedding chamber can be booked for $136.85 for a 30-minute block (couples still need to supply an authorized officiant and two witnesses).

That gap between the price of getting married and having a wedding is part of the courthouse wedding's allure.

Carmen Luk, principal event planner at Toronto's Devoted To You Inc., agreed that courthouse weddings are getting more attention because of high-profile celebrities such as Charli XCX and Lipa, but said that they're hardly a new concept. In many parts of the world such as China, Germany and France couples will often have a civil ceremony before a religious or symbolic celebration. In many countries across Europe and Latin America, civil ceremonies are the only legally recognized form of marriage.

"I don't see courthouse weddings as replacing traditional weddings. I see them as expanding the choices available to couples," Luk said. "Today's couples are much more intentional about what they're spending money on and where they want to place emotional value."

Rainbow Chan, owner and creative director of Toronto's Rainbow Chan Weddings, has also seen a growing interest in courthouse and microweddings over the past few years. "There isn't one 'right' way to get married any more," she said. "Whether it's 300 guests in a ballroom, 20 guests at city hall or a destination wedding over several days, what people remember most is how the celebration made them feel."

Larger celebrations remain popular, she said, but many couples are separating the legal marriage from the celebration, signing the paperwork simply and hosting a larger party later. Sometimes, as with Lipa or Charli XCX, the legal marriage is the opening act. Other times, it's the whole event.

For sustainability professional Shelby Spurlin, who married her husband Anthony Lieu at a Toronto courthouse last June, the decision was partly financial and partly emotional. "For us, it was definitely about avoiding going into debt over one day," she said. "We hear so much about couples spending $30,000-plus on even a relatively basic wedding in Toronto, and we knew that wasn't something we wanted."

Their total came to about $3,000, including the courthouse fee, professional photography, outfits and a bouquet. Afterward, they went to King Taps, a restaurant and bar, for happy hour with friends and family. They put their savings toward a honeymoon in Japan.

A misconception about courthouse weddings is that simplicity equals the absence of style. But for many people, it just means that style is less likely to be buried under obligations.

It's a sentiment shared by Toronto musicians Madelyn Kirby and Luke Robinson, who got married at Toronto's Osgoode Hall in May before hosting a larger celebration at another venue, Hart House, the next day. Kirby said the courthouse ceremony gave them a "quiet, meaningful moment" with immediate family, while the subsequent party was for their wider community.

The ceremony was intimate and personal: Justice Melanie Kraft, a family friend whom Kirby has known since childhood, officiated; Kirby's brother was the photographer; and both of the couple's mothers served as witnesses. It was followed by lunch at Terroni, an Italian restaurant. "Looking back, there was something really freeing about stripping the ceremony down to its essentials," Kirby said. "It reminded us that a wedding doesn't need to be elaborate to feel significant."

Though some couples might choose to go big for social media, Luk said it's also inspiring many couples to go smaller if that's what they're seeing online.

"I encourage couples to remember that this is one of the first major decisions they'll make together as a married couple," she said. "It's important that the celebration reflects their shared values rather than everyone's expectations."

That said, there can be something wonderful about gathering everyone you love in one room, dancing badly as a collective and letting the aunties gossip and friends give one chaotic speech after another. Particularly in cultures in which weddings are major community milestones, bigger celebrations aren't seen as frivolous. They're about family rituals and belonging.

But as Luk put it, couples don't need to choose between a courthouse and something more meaningful.

"Those are not opposites," she said.

"At the end of the day, there is no prize for having the biggest wedding. The best wedding is the one that feels authentic to you."

Special to The Globe and Mail

Oscar-winning Irish musician Glen Hansard dies in motorcycle crash

PADRAIC HALPIN DUBLIN

Irish musician Glen Hansard, who won a Best Original Song Oscar in 2008 for the indie film *Once* and was lead singer for rock group The Frames, died in a motorcycle crash at the age of 56 early on Wednesday, his management company said.

Bruce Springsteen, whom Hansard shared a stage with, said he and his band were heartbroken at the death of a "great musician, a good friend and a generous and gracious man." Irish Prime Minister Micheal Martin described him as an artist "who made a significant contribution to Ireland's cultural landscape."

The singer-songwriter began busking on the streets of his native Dublin at the age of 13 after dropping out of school, and formed The Frames in 1990. The band's popularity at home helped make their lead singer a fixture on the Irish music scene for the next four decades.

U2 frontman Bono paid tribute to Hansard in a post on X, describing him as "a smiling rascal if you needed him to be ... this most musical and mischievous archangel of Ballymun."

Bono said Hansard "could never walk by a person living rough without checking they were OK," and praised his work to help reduce homelessness.

"Voice of the streets. A choir of angels in one man," Bono said.

Hansard released a number of albums under his own name – receiving a Grammy nomination in 2016 – and as part of duo The Swell Season with fellow Oscar winner and *Once* co-star Marketa Irglova.

The pair's performances in the low-budget movie shot on hand-held camcorders where a street musician falls in love with a young Czech immigrant, and their Oscar-winning duet *Falling Slowly*, brought Hansard's music to a much wider audience.

The film, which featured a number of other songs composed and performed by Hansard and Irglova, was turned into a hit Broadway musical that won eight Tony Awards in 2012.

Accepting his Oscar from presenter John

Glen Hansard GARY HERSHORN/REUTERS

Travolta, a stunned Hansard said: "What are we doing here? This is mad."

His only acting experience prior to *Once* was as a band member in Alan Parker's 1991 hit *The Commitments*.

Many tributes also focused on Hansard's charity work and advocacy. A Christmas Eve busk he started at the depths of Ireland's financial crisis in 2010 has raised over €2-million for the Dublin Simon Community charity, who described the singer on Wednesday as "a giant in the fight against homelessness."

The annual gathering in central Dublin has featured Bono, Sinead O'Connor and Shane MacGowan. Hansard led a rendition of The Pogues' Christmas anthem *Fairytale of New York* at his friend MacGowan's funeral in 2023.

"With broken hearts we announce the passing of Glen Hansard who passed away, in the early hours of this morning, following a road-traffic accident in Dublin," ATC Management said in a statement.

Irish police said a man in his 50s had died after a single-vehicle motorcycle collision in the west of Dublin. Emergency services were alerted shortly before 4:30 a.m. (0330 GMT) and the man was pronounced dead a short time after being treated at the scene.

Hansard leaves his wife, Maire Saaritsa, and their three-year-old son Christy.

REUTERS

Booker Prize semi-finalists include former winners Marlon James, Douglas Stuart

JILL LAWLESS
LONDON

Booker Prize winners Marlon James and Douglas Stuart are in the running again for the prestigious fiction award, alongside Dublin gangs, dystopian science fiction and the New England characters of Pulitzer Prize laureate Elizabeth Strout.

Judges read 163 novels to come up with the 13 semi-finalists announced Tuesday for the £50,000 (US$66,000) Booker Prize, a list described by historian Mary Beard, head of the judging panel, as literary "dynamite."

The list includes James' *The Disappearers*, about a group of gay men in a hostile 1980s Jamaica; Stuart's *John of John*, a story of father-son secrets on a remote Scottish island; and Strout's heartfelt small-town tale *The Things We Never Say*.

James won the Booker in 2015 for *A Brief History of Seven Killings* and Stuart won in 2020 for *Shuggie Bain*. Strout's *Oh William!* was a finalist in 2022. She won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 2009 for *Olive Kitteridge*.

They sit alongside lesser-known names on a Booker longlist that includes authors with roots in Britain, Ireland, Jamaica, Mexico, Turkey and the United States.

Three of those on the list are debut authors: Turkish-American writer Kenan Orhan for family history story *The Renovation*, British author Rebecca Perry for Medieval-to-modern tale *May We Feed the King* and Ireland's Djamel White for *All Them Dogs*, a thriller set in the Dublin underworld.

White, at 28, is the youngest author in the running. The oldest is 81-year-old M. John Harrison, whose postapocalyptic tale *The End of Everything* is a rare science fiction novel to make the Booker list. The other contenders are *The Shadow of the Object* by Chloe Aridjis, *Black Bag* by Luke Kennard, *The Vivisectors* by Missouri Williams, *Switzy* by Emma Cline, *Helen of Nowhere* by Makenna Goodman and Gwendoline Riley's *The Palm House*.

Beard said the five jurors, who include Pulp frontman Jarvis Cocker and American novelist Patricia Lockwood, tried to look beyond the idea of a typical Booker winner – "slightly serious, about to be classic." Instead they chose novels that are "trying to expand the boundaries of how we can think about ourselves in completely different ways."

"Sometimes they're using humour, sometimes it's pathos, sometimes there's shock value," Beard said. "They're risk-takers. They are dynamite. They say 'Come on, try seeing it a different way.'"

Founded in 1969, the Booker Prize has a reputation for transforming writers' careers and is open to novels from any country published in the U.K. and Ireland. Last year's winner was *Flesh* by Hungarian-British writer David Szalay. The judges will announce six finalists on Sept. 22, and the winner will be revealed Nov. 9 at a ceremony in London.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

I found a place to come back down to Earth

FIRST PERSON

I believed flying was the ultimate freedom, but it turns out the greatest journey of all is staying grounded, **Alona Vasylieva** writes

ILLUSTRATION BY ALEX DEADMAN-WYLIE

For 10 years, I measured my life in altitudes and time zones as an international flight attendant for Ukraine International Airlines. Most of my routes were across Europe, but my favourites were the long-haul journeys to North America. When I graduated from Dnipro National University with a degree in international journalism, I fell into a career wrapped in romance and adventure. Coming from a small town in Ukraine, securing a cabin crew position with the national carrier felt like an monumental achievement – a literal and metaphorical launchpad into the wider world.

The airplane cabin became my home, and the world below served as an ever-shifting, kaleidoscopic backdrop. I was a professional nomad living out of a suitcase, managing chaos at 35,000 feet and learning to read the unspoken anxieties of complete strangers. On any given day, I might be administering first aid to a passenger in medical distress, managing a row of rowdy flyers or co-ordinating with security to escort an angry, deported passenger.

On top of that lay the emergencies such as sudden cabin decompressions where you are forced to suppress your own terror to anchor everyone else's safety. I was constantly fuelled by adrenalin and the raw energy of perpetual movement.

Then, on Feb. 24, 2022, my world came to a sudden halt when Russia invaded Ukraine. Everything shattered at 4 a.m. when my husband, our son and I woke up to the terrifying thunder of explosions shaking Kyiv.

We chose to flee to Canada to start our lives from scratch. Coming from a bustling European capital, we assumed we needed a major Canadian city for employment.

But Canadian volunteers unexpectedly matched us with a wonderful host family in St. Marys, a small town in Southwestern Ontario famous for its historic limestone architecture and quiet pace. We didn't choose this town; this town chose us, and we accepted the embrace.

Trading a non-stop life of global aviation for a community of 7,000 people was a profound psychological shock. For the first few months, the stillness of the countryside felt deafening. There were no longer the high-stakes, noisy preflight briefings where our crew loudly ran through emergency drill procedures to stay sharp. There was no chaotic rush through international terminals. Instead, I found quiet farmer's markets, gentle trails to stroll along the Thames River that wind through the trees.

> In my new Canadian home, I quickly realized that human connection operates on a completely different timeline.

As a flight attendant, I was trained to be a master of transition. I met hundreds of people a day, cared for them during a flight and then walked away from their lives forever. It was an industry of intense but fleeting connections.

In my new Canadian home, I quickly realized that human connection operates on a completely different timeline. The person you pass on the sidewalk today is the exact same person you will stand next to at the grocery store tomorrow. Relationships here are not built in a fast-paced, single shift. They are cultivated slowly, much like the made-from-scratch sourdough loaves I began baking in my kitchen.

As the months turned into years, a quiet transformation took place inside me. The core skills I developed in the air – empathy, observation and the ability to find tranquillity in unfamiliar environments – were the precise tools I needed to build a life on the ground.

Remembering my roots in journalism, I decided to pick up my pen again. I reached out to our local newspaper, and for over a year now, I have been writing a weekly column. I rely on the same observational muscle I used in the aircraft cabin but now I capture the peaceful, grounding moments of small-town life and the moments that connect us all.

The biggest difference now is that these reflections don't disappear at the baggage claim. Today, I work as a receptionist at a local insurance office, and I smile like a child every time my readers wave to me through the front office window. Neighbours regularly stop me on the street just to say, "Alona, your last article was so funny, keep it up!"

Sometimes, when I look up and see thin white contrails cutting through the blue sky, a wave of nostalgia hits me. I still miss the pure thrill of takeoff and the quiet magic of watching the sun rise over the Atlantic Ocean from the galley. But then I look around my quiet street, at the deep roots my family is planting here and I smile.

I used to believe that flying was the ultimate expression of freedom. But it turns out that learning your neighbours' names and finding your true voice in a small town is the greatest journey of all. It has finally brought me back down to Earth.

Alona Vasylieva lives in St. Marys, Ont.

First Person is a daily personal piece submitted by readers. Have a story to tell? See our guidelines at tgam.ca/essayguide.

TODAY'S SUDOKU SOLUTION

7	1	4	3	9	8	5	6	2
5	9	2	7	4	6	1	8	3
6	8	3	1	2	5	9	7	4
2	6	7	5	1	3	4	9	8
3	4	9	8	6	2	7	5	1
1	5	8	4	7	9	2	3	6
8	3	1	9	5	4	6	2	7
4	2	5	6	8	7	3	1	9
9	7	6	2	3	1	8	4	5

TODAY'S KENKEN SOLUTION

30× 5	2	4+ 3	1	10+ 4	6
3	11+ 5	2	11+ 6	3÷ 1	5+ 4
4− 2	18× 6	4	5	3	1
6	3	1	2÷ 4	10+ 2	5
3− 4	4− 1	5	2	90× 6	3
1	2− 4	6	3	5	2 2

WORLD FORECAST

	TODAY		TOMORROW		SATURDAY	
AMSTERDAM	26/17	PC	24/15	SH	24/14	S
ATHENS	32/23	S	31/23	S	30/22	S
BANGKOK	30/26	T	30/26	T	31/26	T
BEIJING	35/27	T	35/26	T	32/25	T
BERLIN	37/20	S	30/19	SH	27/16	T
BRUSSELS	28/19	PC	29/15	PC	27/16	S
COPENHAGEN	25/17	S	21/16	S	19/14	C
FRANKFURT	36/20	S	34/19	PC	29/18	SH
HONG KONG	28/26	T	27/25	T	27/25	T
JERUSALEM	33/22	S	34/24	S	35/25	S
LAS VEGAS	42/30	S	44/31	S	46/31	S
LONDON	28/17	PC	26/17	S	26/17	S
LOS ANGELES	33/21	S	35/22	S	36/22	S
MADRID	38/24	S	37/23	S	36/23	S
MIAMI	35/26	PC	35/27	PC	34/26	T
MOSCOW	21/17	R	25/16	PC	26/19	PC
NEW DELHI	34/28	T	34/27	T	33/28	T
NEW YORK	26/19	SH	28/21	S	28/22	PC
NICE	32/27	S	32/27	S	31/26	S
ORLANDO	31/25	SH	32/25	T	32/24	T
PARIS	32/19	SH	31/18	PC	30/18	PC
PHOENIX	44/34	S	46/34	S	44/35	S
ROME	38/26	S	39/26	S	39/27	S
SAN FRANCISCO	17/13	S	18/13	S	20/13	S
SEOUL	31/25	S	32/26	SH	32/26	SH
SINGAPORE	30/25	T	30/25	PC	30/27	T
SYDNEY	15/8	S	16/10	S	17/9	SH
TOKYO	34/28	PC	33/26	T	33/28	PC
WASHINGTON	30/22	S	31/22	S	32/23	PC

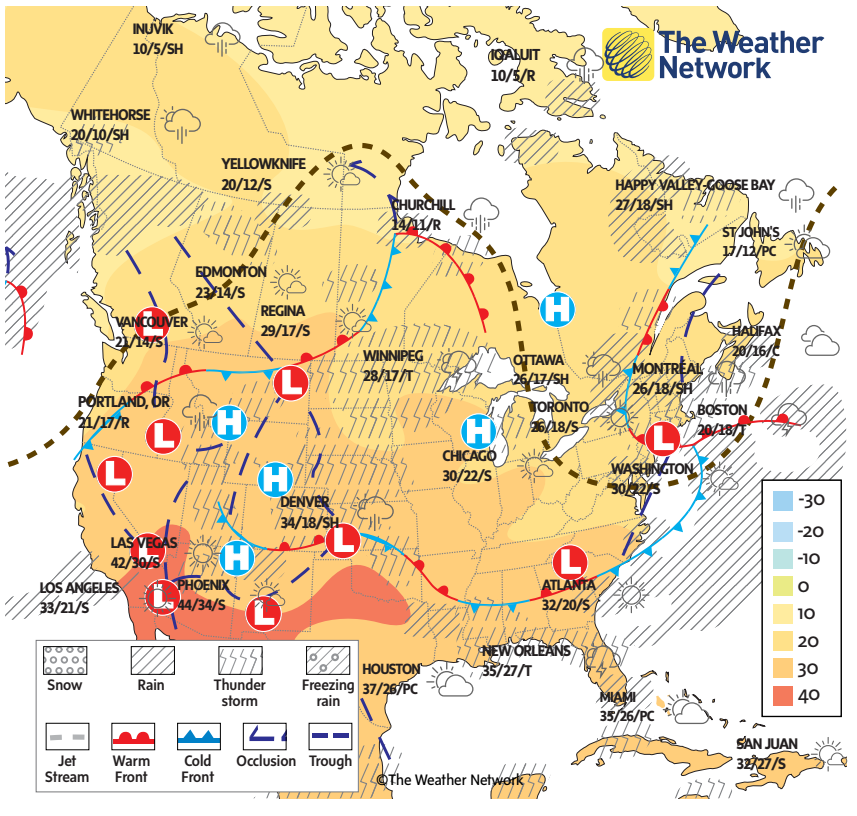
NATIONAL FORECAST

	TODAY		TOMORROW		SATURDAY	
BANFF	26/10	S	27/11	S	26/7	SH
BARRIE	25/14	S	28/17	S	27/18	PC
BRANDON	28/15	PC	28/17	S	31/20	S
CALGARY	28/14	S	31/15	S	33/13	S
CHARLOTTETOWN	23/16	PC	21/15	SH	24/17	S
CHICOUTIMI	23/16	R	26/17	SH	27/18	T
CHURCHILL	14/11	R	21/13	PC	22/15	S
CORNER BROOK	25/14	S	25/15	PC	23/15	PC
CORNWALL	25/18	T	27/18	PC	28/20	PC
EDMONTON	23/14	S	27/17	S	27/13	T
HALIFAX	20/16	C	20/16	SH	23/17	S
HAMILTON	27/14	S	27/17	S	26/19	PC
HUNTSVILLE	25/13	S	27/17	S	27/18	T
IQALUIT	10/5	R	9/5	R	11/5	SH
JASPER	25/9	PC	26/11	S	22/8	T
KELOWNA	31/15	S	33/17	S	25/11	SH
KINGSTON	25/18	SH	25/20	S	26/21	PC
LONDON	26/13	S	28/18	S	27/19	PC
MONTRÉAL	26/18	SH	27/20	PC	28/20	PC
NIAGARA FALLS	26/16	S	27/19	S	27/20	PC
NORTH BAY	25/14	S	26/17	S	25/17	T
OTTAWA	26/17	SH	28/18	S	28/19	PC
PRINCE GEORGE	22/11	C	22/13	S	18/10	R
PETERBOROUGH	27/15	S	27/17	S	26/19	PC
QUÉBEC	25/16	PC	25/16	SH	28/19	T
REGINA	29/17	S	29/17	S	34/21	S
SASKATOON	27/15	S	28/16	S	34/19	S
SAULT STE MARIE	29/18	S	25/18	T	23/16	R
SAINT JOHN	23/16	SH	22/15	SH	25/15	S
SEPT-ÎLES	18/13	PC	19/13	S	18/14	SH
ST JOHN'S	17/12	PC	16/12	C	17/12	C
SUDBURY	27/16	S	27/18	T	26/17	T
THUNDER BAY	25/18	T	26/17	T	25/15	SH
THOMPSON	24/12	S	23/15	S	27/19	S
TORONTO	26/18	S	26/20	S	25/19	PC
VAL-D'OR	25/14	S	27/18	T	22/13	R
VANCOUVER	21/14	S	23/16	S	20/13	SH
VICTORIA	20/13	S	20/15	S	18/13	SH
WHISTLER	21/12	PC	21/14	PC	15/9	R
WHITEHORSE	20/10	SH	20/10	PC	21/11	S
WINNIPEG	28/18	T	28/18	S	31/21	S
YELLOWKNIFE	21/13	S	21/13	S	20/11	PC

LEGEND

Daytime high, overnight low, and conditions

C CLOUDY	RS RAIN/SNOW
FG FOG	S SUN
FR FREEZING RAIN	SN SNOW
HZ HAZE	SF SNOW FLURRIES
NA NOT AVAILABLE	SH SHOWERS
PC PARTLY CLOUDY	T THUNDERSTORMS
R RAIN	W WINDY



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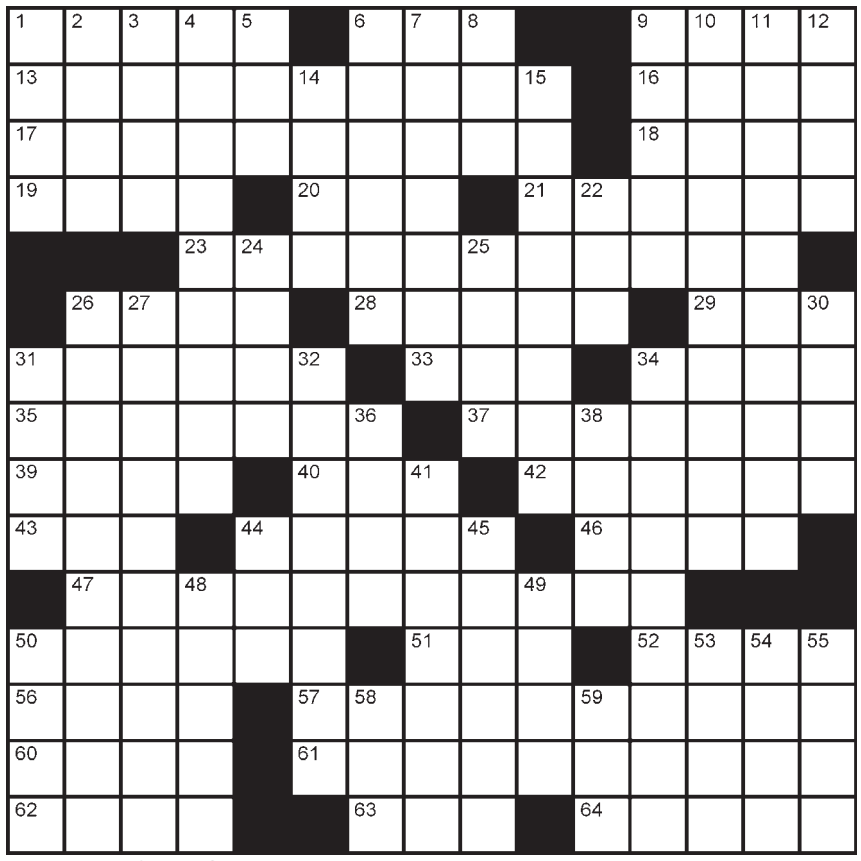
UNIVERSAL CROSSWORD

SUMMER 2026 THEMELESS WEEK, PUZZLE 4 BY BRIAN CALLAHAN



EDITED BY DAVID STEINBERG

ACROSS

1 Is inclined
6 Certain citation style: Abbr.
9 An "X" of XOXO
13 "See ya, senorita!"
16 Prefix with "war" or "lock"
17 "Is it OK for us to leave?"
18 Small-screen spot
19 Black cat, perhaps
20 Stardew Valley mine find
21 Follower of Islam's second-largest sect
23 Product made from cashews or soy
26 Make out, in Manchester
28 Parties with haupia and poi
29 Secondary social, say
31 Football maneuver that may involve a touch
33 Showtime subsidiary
34 Malinin on the ice
35 Unprivileged individual
37 Playing roller derby, say
39 "Planet of the ____"
40 Ablaze
42 Rises suddenly
43 Thrice-repeated conjunction in the U.S. Postal Service "creed"
44 Already
46 Convent crew
47 They might be worn for a night out!
50 Oscar-winning King
51 ____-cone
52 Voice quality
56 Mouth-related
57 "I'm sorry"
60 "Hold up"
61 Pompous
62 Phisher's targets: Abbr.
63 Esports rating system
64 Jaguars, e.g.

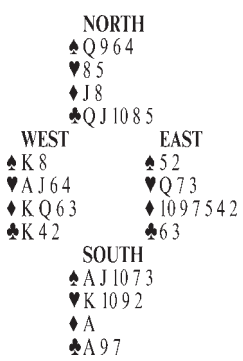
DOWN

1 ____ Bell
2 Wax-wrapped wheel
3 This clue's number squared
4 Dislikes on Reddit
5 Chicago-to-Louisville dir.
6 Lacking scruples
7 Morsel used in pesto
8 In the past
9 Swimming legend Ledecky
10 Orthodontics brand
11 They're sometimes crossed to purchase fireworks
12 Fries or tots, typically
14 Eager
15 "You're making me blush!"
22 "____ All That" (2021 rom-com)
24 Tour de France champion Bernal
25 Security system devices, for short
26 Programs with evil twins and amnesiacs, stereotypically
27 "That's the LAST time!"
30 Labels
31 "Larger ____ Life" (Backstreet Boys hit)
32 Widely knowledgeable person
34 Statement of faith?
36 Bespectacled "Bob's Burgers" character
38 Parent's sister
41 It's rigged on a brig
44 Kick out permanently
45 "You down?"
48 Stands up at the altar
49 Prying
50 This crossword has 15
53 Posthumous bio
54 Brussels-based grp.
55 "Slow Churned" ice cream brand
58 Long-handled gardening tool
59 NYC subway operator

BRIDGE

BY STEVE BECKER
THURSDAY, JULY 30, 2026

South dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.



The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 [S]	Dble	2 [S]	Pass
4 [S]			

Opening Lead – king of diamonds.

It has been said that nothing is certain except death and taxes, but the knowledgeable bridge player would add to these the maxim that each player is dealt 13 cards. The backbone of good card play rests on this simple truth.

Take this case where West leads the king of diamonds against four spades. Declarer wins and plays the ace and another spade, losing to the king. West tries to cash the queen of diamonds, but declarer ruffs.

South crosses to dummy with a trump and tries a club finesse, losing to the king. If West, eyeing dummy's clubs, gets panicky and plays the ace of hearts because he is afraid South will discard his heart losers on dummy's clubs, he hands declarer the contract.

West may make this play because he thinks the only chance to stop the contract is to hope East has the king of hearts. However, this reasoning is unsound. West should return a club instead, because he cannot lose anything by doing so.

West has all the information he needs to make the club return completely safe. He knows South started with exactly five spades and one diamond, leaving declarer with seven cards in hearts and clubs.

If South has two clubs, he must have five hearts; if he has three clubs, he must have four hearts; if he has four clubs, he must have three hearts. In all of these cases, South cannot escape whatever heart losers he has.

Consequently, West's only correct action is to return a club at trick seven and let nature take its course, which in this case results in down one. The danger that South's heart losers will somehow disappear is more imaginary than real.

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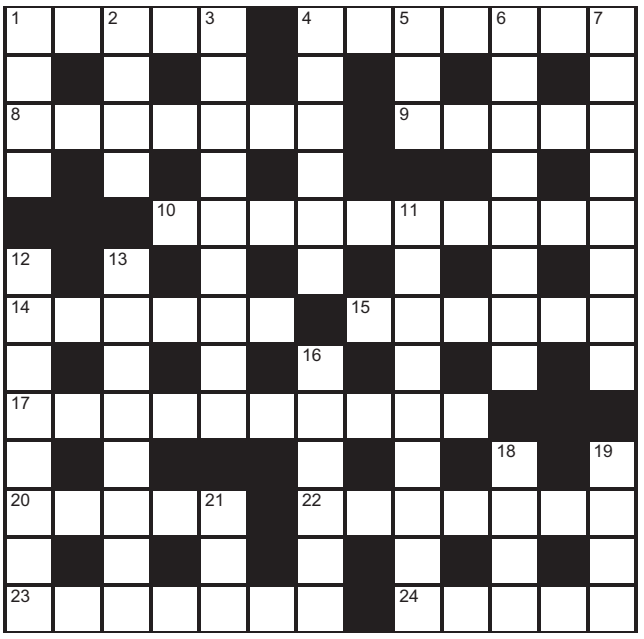
CRYPTIC CROSSWORD



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ACROSS

1 Manage to get round small group of trees (5)
4 Tedium of moving bedroom (7)
8 Leaders among sharks and rays eat fish (7)
9 Follow around river path (5)
10 Suffering minutes inside club, mostly loud (10)
14 Company briefly employing family member (6)
15 Swelling British association of workers (6)
17 Sign of hesitation after my remark upset reveller (10)
20 Mean drunk in snug (5)
22 Rubbish clothing at start of season (7)
23 Climb-down on the subject of free entertainment? (7)
24 Certainly cutting for each card game (5)

DOWN

1 Halved cash with street players (4)
2 Standard king's garden open to the public (4)
3 I bite idly resolving fitness for consumption (9)
4 Run into coastal shore as breakers do (6)
5 Renegade and traitor, primarily (3)
6 Monstrous biocidal bats (8)
7 Combative Italian dividing his city over time (8)
11 Route maps ordered for Cheddar perhaps (9)
12 Weapon armistice nearly knocked for six (8)
13 Totally striking, OK? (8)
16 Bot making all get grief on Tinder initially (6)
18 Want chessplayer to sacrifice bishop (4)
19 Tackle illicit drugs (4)
21 Bond regularly involved in strife (3)

SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

INSTRUCTIONS
Fill in the grid so that each row of nine squares, each column of nine and each section of nine (three squares by three) contains the numbers 1 through 9 in any order. There is only one solution to each puzzle.

		4		9	8	5		2
5			7			1		
				2	5		7	
2			5	1				8
				6				
1				7	9			6
	3		9	5				
		5			7			9
9		6	2	3		8		

7/30

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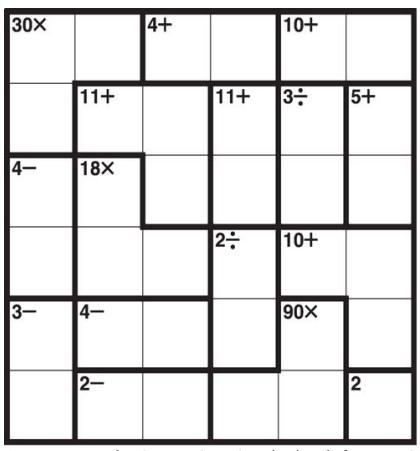
KENKEN



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INSTRUCTIONS

1. Each row and each column must contain the numbers 1 through 6 without repeating.
2. The numbers within the heavily outlined boxes, called cages, must combine using the given operation (in any order) to produce the target numbers in the top-left corners.
3. Freebies: Fill in single-box cages with the numbers in the top-left corner.

SOLUTIONS

YESTERDAY'S UNIVERSAL CROSSWORD

A	C	I	D	■	A	B	A	S	H	■	P	E	G	S
L	I	M	A	■	G	E	N	I	U	S	I	D	E	A
E	V	I	L	■	G	E	T	S	H	A	N	G	R	Y
S	I	N	■	F	I	N	I	■	■	P	O	E	M	S
■	C	H	L	O	E	■	C	U	E	I	N	■	■	■
■	P	E	O	N	■	P	I	N	T	O	■	W	I	X
B	R	A	N	D	■	E	P	I	C	S	■	H	M	M
L	I	V	E	U	P	T	O	T	H	E	H	Y	P	E
O	D	E	■	E	E	R	I	E	■	X	E	N	O	N
G	E	N	■	P	A	I	N	S	■	U	F	O	S	■
■	■	■	C	A	R	E	T	■	W	A	T	T	S	■
S	M	E	A	R	■	■	M	A	I	L	■	B	I	T
H	A	R	D	T	O	T	E	L	L	■	G	O	B	I
I	K	I	D	Y	O	U	N	O	T	■	I	T	L	L
P	O	K	Y	■	F	E	T	E	S	■	G	H	E	E

YESTERDAY'S CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

D	R	E	N	C	H	■	■	■	O	S	L	O	■	■
E	■	G	■	O	■	A	■	F	■	A	■	W	■	■
C	A	R	A	V	A	N	■	R	E	B	E	L	■	■
I	■	E	■	E	■	T	■	A	■	B	■	E	■	■
D	E	T	E	N	T	I	O	N	■	A	C	T	■	■
E	■	■	■	T	■	■	■	K	■	T	■	■	■	■
R	E	N	E	G	E	■	B	I	S	H	O	P	■	■
■	■	O	■	A	■	■	■	N	■	■	■	O	■	■
D	I	M	■	R	E	L	U	C	T	A	N	T	■	■
E	■	A	■	D	■	I	■	E	■	G	■	H	■	■
B	U	D	G	E	■	V	I	N	T	A	G	E	■	■
U	■	I	■	N	■	E	■	S	■	I	■	A	■	■
T	I	C	K	■	■	■	P	E	R	N	O	D	■	■

Solutions to today's Sudoku and Kenken can be found in the Life & Arts content area of the A section. Crossword solutions will be with tomorrow's puzzles.

Trump asks top court to throw out defamation verdict

Lawyers for the U.S. President say he cannot be held liable for $83-million in damages for comments made while in office

LINDSAY WHITEHURST
LARRY NEUMEISTER WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump and the Justice Department are asking the Supreme Court to toss an US$83-million defamation verdict won by writer E. Jean Carroll after she accused him of sexual assault, saying he can't be sued for comments he made while he was president.

It's the second time Mr. Trump has asked the justices to nix damages awarded by a jury to Ms. Carroll, a long-time advice columnist and former TV talk show host. The Supreme Court refused in June to hear his appeal of another verdict, for US$5-million, that found him liable for sexual abuse and defamation.

The latest case centres on comments Mr. Trump made during his first term as president. The Justice Department wants to invoke the Westfall Act, which shields government employees from being sued for doing their jobs.

"Absent this Court's intervention, the sitting President is facing nearly a hundred million dollars of personal liability for conduct that was well within the scope of his federal office," federal attorneys wrote. "That alone deserves this Court's attention."

The documents were reviewed Wednesday by the Associated Press and expected to be formally docketed with the court shortly.

Mr. Trump's lawyers, meanwhile, argued that an appeals court "engaged in procedural contortions" to avoid addressing Mr. Trump's claims that presidential immunity protects him from the US$83-million award because he made the statements in question in 2019 while he was president.

The lawyers argued that the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Manhattan ruled in a manner that "cries out for this Court's review in this unprecedented case" and called the damages "grossly excessive."

"This is the first case in our nation's history in which a court has imposed damages liability on a president for his conduct in office," the lawyers wrote.

Ms. Carroll's lawyers have declined to comment on the latest Trump filing.

Mr. Trump has long argued he cannot be sued over comments he made about Ms. Carroll during his first term where he disavowed knowing her and attacked her motivations for going public with her story in a recent memoir. He's also asking the Supreme Court justices to reconsider their rejection of his appeal in the US$5-million verdict.

The appeal comes about two years after the Supreme Court granted Mr. Trump broad immunity from criminal prosecution as a former president.

Ms. Carroll testified twice before New York juries that Mr. Trump sexually assaulted her in spring 1996 in a dressing room at Bergdorf Goodman, a luxury retailer across the street from Trump Tower. She first went public with the claims in a 2019 memoir.

She sued Mr. Trump for defamation after he accused her of making up the allegation to help book sales, adding that he'd never met her and "she's not my type." He has repeatedly denied any wrongdoing.

A Manhattan jury awarded her US$83-million in damages in January, 2024. Lower courts have so far rejected Mr. Trump's appeals to overturn the verdict, though the New York-based appeals court split over the decision and agreed to delay that payout until the Supreme Court weighs in.

In 2023, another jury said Ms. Carroll was entitled to US$5-million after concluding that Mr. Trump had subjected her to sexual abuse in the department store encounter and for defamation for remarks he had made after his first term ended. That judgment has been paid.

The Associated Press does not identify people who say they have been sexually assaulted unless they come forward publicly, as Ms. Carroll has done.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dr. Anthony Fauci appears before the Senate at the Capitol on Wednesday in Washington, where he was grilled over his role during the COVID-19 pandemic. ALLISON ROBBERT/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fauci: Democrats question value of hearing

FROM A1

At the time, Mr. Biden said the pardon was to shield against "unjustified and politically motivated prosecutions" in the future.

Nonetheless, the pandemic remains a potent political subject and Mr. Paul has used the powers of his committee chairmanship to make public internal government documents related to the pandemic – even, last week, Dr. Fauci's personal diary – while issuing a subpoena for the octogenarian former public servant to appear before his committee.

Dr. Fauci, however, provided no answer to dozens of questions, responding instead with the same 21-word statement invoking the Fifth Amendment.

When a lawyer for Dr. Fauci sought to speak on his client's behalf, Mr. Paul ordered his removal, warning Dr. Fauci that it is illegal to obstruct a congressional investigation, and "there will be repercussions to your refusal to testify today." He promised a vote next week on whether Dr. Fauci should be held in contempt.

For years, scientists, skeptics, the intelligence community and others have questioned whether work done at the Wuhan institute created the COVID-19 virus. No definitive proof of a lab error has emerged, but neither have researchers proved the pathway for a natural origin, a scenario that the World Health Organization says is the most likely cause of the pandemic. Dr. Fauci has aligned himself with that view, without ruling out the possibility of a lab leak.

Mr. Paul accused Dr. Fauci of long-standing support for gain-of-function research, in which scientists use laboratory techniques to make animal viruses infectious to humans. Documents made public in recent years have shown that, after the pandemic began its deadly spread around the world, Dr. Fauci and other researchers sought privately to determine whether a lab leak could have caused the pandemic – at a time when they publicly played down that possibility, including in an influential early 2020 article published in *Nature*.

"You did not tell American people the full story," Mr. Paul said.

He juxtaposed Dr. Fauci's private thoughts with his public statements. On Jan. 26, 2020, Dr. Fauci wrote in his diary that a wet market in Wuhan "was not the source, it was the amplifier," of the infection. In numerous interviews and statements around that time, however, Dr. Fauci pointed to the role of Chinese wet markets in the pandemic, with animals brought in from the wild providing "ample opportunity for a virus to jump" to humans.

> "Under Senator Joe McCarthy, it became standard operating procedure to seek that kind of prosecutorial objective. We should not be part of a rerun of that kind of effort."
>
> **RICHARD BLUMENTHAL**
> CONNECTICUT DEMOCRAT

In his diary writing, Dr. Fauci was nonetheless consistent in his belief that "somewhere the virus jumped from animals to humans."

But Mr. Paul accused him of deliberately dissembling in public.

The possibility of a lab leak "was completely discounted, because I think you were worried that if it was seen that you funded dangerous research that started the pandemic, you would get blamed," Mr. Paul said.

He sought to damn Dr. Fauci with questions: "Did his actions lead to the largest man-made plague in human history? Are the millions dead the result of his experiments or experiments that he approved that increased the pathogenicity of deadly viruses?"

Dr. Fauci has strongly denied supporting gain-of-function research in China – "if anybody is lying here, senator, it is you," he told Mr. Paul five years ago.

Democrats questioned the value of once again interrogating a subject that has already been the subject of nearly a dozen congressional reports alongside enormous investigative efforts by scientists and intelligence agencies alike.

Richard Blumenthal, a Connecticut Democrat, accused Republicans of attempting to trap Dr. Fauci into criminal wrongdoing, warning of a return to dark days in American history.

"Under Senator Joe McCarthy, it became standard operating procedure to seek that kind of prosecutorial objective. We should not be part of a rerun of that kind of effort," he said.

Republicans, he told Dr. Fauci, "are eager to rebrand you as a villain in order to distract from their own failure to protect Americans from soaring health care costs."

U.S. President Donald Trump once kept a warm relationship with Dr. Fauci but has for years joined with other conservatives in attacking him. "His ideas were CRAZY!" Mr. Trump wrote Monday on social media. "Also, I said from the beginning that the Virus came from the Wuhan Laboratory in China. Fauci strongly disagreed, always trying to protect China."

For other Republicans, Dr. Fauci remains a singularly toxic figure, responsible not merely for pandemic confusion – and, perhaps, the pandemic itself – but for poisoning American society.

"We have entire generations of Americans who, rightfully so, do not trust our institutions to keep people safe – because of you," said Rick Scott, a Florida Republican.

Others called Dr. Fauci a megalomaniac, a liar, someone who has "done more to harm science than anybody in my lifetime," according to Josh Hawley, a Republican from Missouri.

Dr. Fauci's silence in response to questions, he added, "is admission."

Energy: Carney aiming to avoid latest round of Trump tariffs

FROM A1

The move marks a divergence from the Prime Minister's insistence last week that "everything is on the table" as he decides how to respond to the latest round of Mr. Trump's tariffs, which are set to take effect on Aug. 19.

The U.S. is heavily dependent on Canadian oil – importing about four million barrels a day, nearly two-thirds of all its petroleum imports – making it a powerful potential leverage point.

Mr. Carney also defended Ottawa's decision to end a 5-per-cent tax that streamers must pay to support the creation of Canadian television, movie and music content. A government lawyer wrote in a July 17 court document that Ottawa intends to "eliminate" the levy.

The decision only came to light this week when The Wire Report, a telecom industry news website, obtained a copy of the lawyer's letter. It follows Culture Minister Marc Miller's June order that the federal broadcast regulator review its decision to increase the tax to 15 per cent.

The Prime Minister insisted on Wednesday that the policy U-turn was about keeping streaming services affordable. "Most Canadians have one or two or more of these streamers and it's real money. This stuff adds up."

The Online Streaming Act has been frequently cited by the U.S. government as a top trade irritant. Amazon, Apple and Spotify are all suing in Canadian federal court in a bid to stop the law.

Mr. Miller's spokesperson, Hermine Landry, told The Globe and Mail that streaming platforms "will still be required to reinvest a percentage of their revenues in Canadian and Indigenous content." She said there was no update on what the percentage would be or when a decision on that would be made.

Mr. LeBlanc and Janice Charette, Canada's chief trade negotiator to the United States, met in Washington on Wednesday morning with Mr. Greer. Ms. Charette also met on Tuesday with Jeffrey Goettman, Mr. Greer's deputy for the Western Hemisphere.

Canada is aiming to avoid Mr. Trump imposing his latest round of tariffs – which would amount to 50 per cent on US$20-billion worth of goods, including electronics and alcohol – as well as to reach a deal to lower or eliminate his previously imposed levies on autos, metals and other goods.

On Tuesday evening, Mr. LeBlanc and Mark Wiseman, Canada's ambassador to the U.S., attended a Canada-U.S. Friendship Day event at the Washington Nationals-Toronto Blue Jays baseball game in the American capital. The event was sponsored by the Government of Canada, Netflix, Amazon and Google.

Since taking office last year, Mr. Carney has made a string of concessions to Mr. Trump, such as rolling back retaliatory tariffs on U.S. goods and cancelling a planned digital services tax. Earlier this month, Ottawa agreed to give the U.S. half the net toll revenue from the new Gordie Howe International Bridge between Windsor and Detroit, even though Canada paid the entire $6.4-billion price tag to build the span.

So far, however, Mr. Trump has only increased tariffs on Canada and the two sides have not reached Mr. Carney's promised trade deal.

Some voices, such as Ontario Premier Doug Ford, have urged Mr. Carney to get tougher such as by imposing dollar-for-dollar tariffs on U.S. goods. Mr. Ford himself briefly slapped a 25-per-cent surcharge on his province's electricity exports to the U.S. last year before abruptly changing course after Mr. Trump threatened more tariffs.

Eric Miller, a cross-border business consultant, said throttling the U.S.'s energy supply is "the biggest hammer" Canada has, but it can't realistically be deployed. Such a move would risk costly U.S. retaliation, such as shutting off the pipelines that carry Alberta crude to Ontario refineries via shortcuts through the U.S.

"This is like Canada's nuclear weapon," Mr. Miller, president of the Rideau Potomac Strategy Group, said. "Everybody knows it has it, but it can't really use it."

He said the killing of the streamer tax was a "minor" capitulation because the Carney government doesn't seem to care that much about it. The aim might be to "lower the temperature" in talks by pleasing tech companies, which hold sway with Mr. Trump.

Former U.S. diplomat Scotty Greenwood said that Canada has to be ready to show strength with the U.S. and have a plan in place if there's no deal by Aug. 19.

"Canadians have been hesitant or reticent to flex their muscle. It's time to be really tough and really flex," she said. "With this particular President, this particular counterparty, you've got to negotiate from a position of strength."

She said Mr. Carney will need the premiers and Canadians united behind him, particularly as the latest round of tariffs heavily target Ontario and Quebec while sparing Alberta and Saskatchewan. "It's a smart move on the part of the U.S.," she said, "and Canada has to be equally smart about it."

Conservative MP Shuvaloy Majumdar said Canada should create "a strategic reserve of critical minerals and energy" and unleash its auto and defence manufacturing base to "build up leverage" in negotiations with the U.S.

The Prime Minister on Wednesday made clear that it is possible there will ultimately be no deal at all, vowing to only sign if he can get a good one.

"We're only going to accept a solution that works for Canadians," he said. "We're going to focus now on building toward an agreement, if an agreement is possible."

Otherwise, he said, Canada has "lots of options" to find other markets for its goods. "Everybody wants to do more with Canada," he said, "except the United States."

With reports from Barry Hertz and Mark Rendell in Toronto

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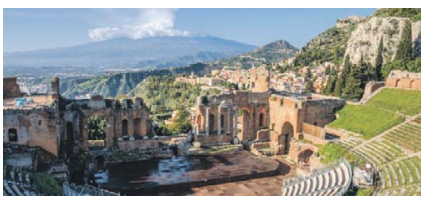

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REPORT ON BUSINESS

OTTAWA/QUEBEC EDITION ▪ THURSDAY, JULY 30, 2026 ▪ GLOBEANDMAIL.COM

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-415.92	-1,153.18	-112.63	-433.97	+0.10/-0.0019	-2.40	+5.20	+0.06

Two major U.S. unions call for stable trade relations with Canada

VANMALA SUBRAMANIAM
FUTURE OF WORK REPORTER

Two major American private-sector unions – representing hundreds of thousands of manufacturing workers – have announced their strong opposition to U.S. President Donald Trump's new suite of tariffs on Canadian goods, calling on the White House to reverse course.

Roxanne Brown, the international president of the United Steelworkers, and Brian Bryant, the international president of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, are warning that Mr. Trump's new 50-per-cent tariffs on certain Canadian products, set to take effect on Aug. 19, are "unfair trade" and will only serve to drive a deeper wedge between the countries.

Both unions sent a letter to U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer on Tuesday, requesting that the White House reconsider using Section 338 of the Tariff Act to impose the levies, and return the U.S.-Canada trade relationship to more "stable, balanced footing."

The letter is notable because the USW has often publicly supported Mr. Trump's trade policies.

"Each country must ensure that trade is fair and that trade irritants are addressed, however the U.S. trade relationship with Canada over the last year and a half has been marked more by division than cooperation," the letter stated.

UNIONS, B6

TRANSPORTATION

VIA GETS A MAKEOVER

Ottawa will spend $1.9-billion to replace aging locomotives and build a new assembly plant, maintenance facility B2

Via Rail will receive 45 new hybrid locomotives to replace its aging fleet. Switzerland's Stadler will build the first nine, with the remaining engines assembled in Montreal. CHRISTINNE MUSCHI/THE CANADIAN PRESS

U.S. Fed leaves interest rates unchanged, but internal anxiety grows

COLBY SMITH

The U.S. Federal Reserve on Wednesday kept interest rates unchanged despite growing divisions among policy-makers to more directly tackle inflation after five years of overshooting the central bank's 2-per-cent target.

The Fed voted 9-3 to maintain rates at 3.5 per cent to 3.75 per cent, a level that has been in place since January. Beth Hammack of the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, Neel Kashkari of the Minneapolis Fed and Lorie Logan of the Dallas Fed dissented, voting instead for a quarter-point increase.

The divisions underscore the tough spot the Fed and its chair, Kevin Warsh, find themselves in as they grapple with new sources of price pressures that are threatening to compound an already complicated and long-standing inflation problem.

Oil prices have whipped around in recent days with the Iran war in a delicate limbo. A deal to end the conflict and reopen the Strait of Hormuz, a crucial shipping path for global energy markets, remains distant. President Donald Trump, speaking to reporters after the Fed's decision, signalled that the fighting was far from over. He said the United States would mount another round of attacks against Iran.

The war is not the only supply shock the Fed is navigating. Mr. Trump is actively adding new tariffs, and the labour market is still digesting sweeping immigration restrictions he has put in place.

FED, B6

Amid a cultural craze for dairy protein, Trump's tariffs take aim at Canadian whey

KATE HELMORE
AGRICULTURE AND FOOD POLICY REPORTER

Since U.S. President Donald Trump took office last year, his tariffs have gone after steel, aluminum and autos. Next up: protein.

When the Trump administration last week announced coming 50-per-cent tariffs on hundreds of Canadian products, the list included a range of proteins, such as whey and other dairy proteins. The White House cited specific "discriminatory" rules within Canada's supply-management system for the duties, which would take effect Aug. 19.

This batch of tariffs would affect more than US$200-million worth of protein exports to the United States, the majority dairy-based products.

It's just the latest example of how the U.S. has taken exception to Canada's supply-management system, a model that curtails production and imports to keep national prices above manufacturing costs.

These measures would affect certain Canadian dairy processors, which U.S. dairy exporters have accused of operating at an unfair advantage in global markets. Canada's three largest dairy processors – Agropur Inc., Saputo Inc. and Lactalis Canada – all have ingredient divisions producing and distributing protein products.

But in targeting dairy protein, Mr. Trump is also heaping extra costs onto massively popular products at the centre of a cultural craze.

There is a global demand boom for protein, driven in large part by "manosphere" fitness influencers and the introduction of weight-loss drugs. Protein supply has been unable to keep up with this demand. According to reports from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, American suppliers of whey are sold out of stocks for the remainder of the year, and prices of high-protein whey have climbed 162 per cent since the start of 2025.

Most popular dairy proteins – including whey – are byproducts of the production of cheese and were, until recently, affordable, readily available products that could be used as supplements in drinks or used to fortify low-protein foods, said Hrvoje Fabek, a professor of food science at the University of Guelph.

PROTEIN, B5

MINING

Allied Gold's $5.5-billion sale to China's Zijin collapses B2

OPINION

We need more incentives to keep older adults working B4

GLOBE INVESTOR

The chip sell-off may just be a prime AI buying opportunity B8

Why a historic housing slump didn't spark a recession

TIM SHUFELT
INVESTMENT REPORTER

ANALYSIS

The Canadian housing bubble is sure starting to look like it has fully deflated.

After 4½ years and a 20-per-cent hit to the average price of a home nationally, the market has finally stabilized.

Not that boom times are back. Far from it. But a gradually tightening market, with prices steady for about five months, suggests we are now seeing the bottom.

If that proves to be the end of it, what stands out most is how well it was contained. The decline in prices lasted nearly as long as the U.S. housing crash which started in 2008-09, and was deeper than the bear market in Ontario real estate in the 1990s, making it arguably the most severe correction on record.

And yet, there have been few signs of broader economic fallout. Where's the contagion? Why no recession?

Part of the story is how adaptable and resilient the modern economy has become. Again and again, relationships that were once thought to reliably predict recessions have broken down in recent years.

"Housing is the business cycle," American economist Edward Leamer wrote in 2007. His point was soon proven when the collapse of the U.S. housing market triggered a global financial and economic crisis.

Mr. Leamer, who died in 2025, argued that trouble in the residential real estate market was the best warning sign of a coming recession.

If true, the Canadian economy should have been doubly vulnerable, given how much of the country's resources were poured into housing. At its peak in 2021, residential investment accounted for one dollar out of every $10 generated in the economy.

Exceptionally high levels of household debt and a banking system saturated in residential mortgages surely meant that when the bubble burst, a grim fate awaited the country.

RECESSION, B6

COMPANIES

CELESTICA B9
CENOVUS ENERGY B2
DEUTSCHE BANK B7
GIBSON ENERGY B9
MICROSOFT B2

SPORTS

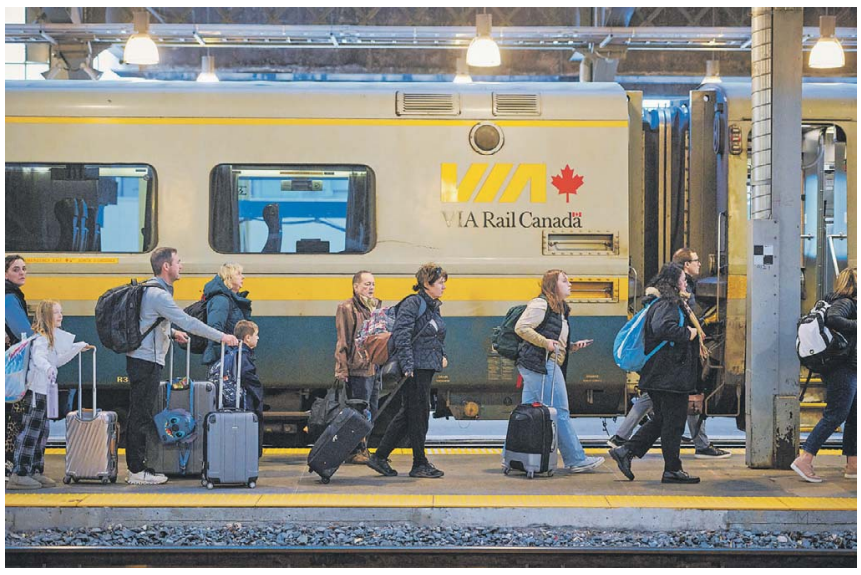
B11-B15

SOCCER Infantino sets deadline for member federations to accept private investor offers B11
BASEBALL Vancouver partners with real estate developer Zack Ross on MLB franchise bid B13

Ottawa to spend $1.9-billion on new trains

Locomotives will replace Via Rail's aging fleet across the country

NICK MURRAY OTTAWA



The federal Transport Minister says the deal will create 1,200 new full-time jobs and the hybrid trains will be built with Canadian-made batteries. SAMMY KOGAN/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

The federal government says it plans to spend $1.6-billion to replace 45 of Via Rail's aging locomotives and another $357-million to build a new assembly plant and maintenance facility.

"Locomotive assembly is returning to Canada," Transport Minister Steven MacKinnon said Wednesday at a news conference in Montreal, where the plant will be built.

Ottawa says the trains will be built by Switzerland-based Stadler Rail AG. The first nine are to be built in Spain, while the remaining 36 will be built in Canada after Canadian workers learn how to assemble them from their Spanish counterparts.

The locomotives are expected to be the first hybrid trains in North America.

"An aging fleet comes with challenges. Today's announcement gives us the tools we need to do better by our passengers," Via Rail chief executive officer Mathieu Paquette said.

"The new hybrid locomotive offers us better performance, reliability, and will allow us to reduce our emissions and fuel use."

The trains will replace Via Rail's fleet across the country, except for the Windsor-Quebec City corridor, where the federal government is planning the Alto high-speed rail line. The trains along that corridor were replaced in 2018.

Officials at the news conference were asked how the new locomotives will improve Via Rail's service.

Canada's Auditor-General reported earlier this year that the Crown corporation needed to improve its service and noted that Via had failed over the past decade to improve its on-time performance, which sank to a dismal 30 per cent in the first three months of 2025.

"It's true there are obstacles with respect to reliable operation of Via Rail in certain parts of the country, particularly where Via Rail shares its rail routes with cargo trains," Mr. MacKinnon said in French.

"But we expect improvements in customer service, in terms of reliability. People should count on a reliable train service."

Speaking to The Canadian Press later, Mr. MacKinnon said the new equipment will improve Via's reliability.

"More broadly, we expect Via Rail to improve its customer service experience, and improve its reliability track record," he said.

"Reliability is one of – if not the – essential ingredient in attracting riders. We have an interest as a country in attracting ridership on Via Rail, and to Alto when it is constructed. So all of the decisions we make are with a view to helping Via to improve their service, and we've set out a clear challenge to Via management to make sure the situation continues to improve."

Mr. MacKinnon said the deal will create 1,200 new full-time jobs and the hybrid trains will be built with Canadian-made batteries.

The first trains are expected to enter service by 2031.

Mr. Paquette also said Via Rail will soon make an announcement on replacing its passenger cars.

"The process is still ongoing, so I can't comment. But I can say that we'll make an announcement," Mr. Paquette said in French.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Cenovus CEO sees growth from agreement signed by Ottawa, Alberta and oil firms

EMMA GRANEY
ENERGY REPORTER
CALGARY

Chief executive Jon McKenzie says Cenovus is 'well on track' to average more than one million barrels a day in July, the first month the company has ever hit that number. AMIR SALEHI/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

The energy agreement recently signed by Alberta, Ottawa and Canada's five largest oil sands companies paves the way for significant production growth, says Jon McKenzie, the head of Calgary-based **Cenovus Energy Inc.**

The pact, signed July 2, pushes forward a massive carbon-capture project in the province's north, clearing away another hurdle to the construction of a new West Coast oil pipeline, a major priority for both the federal and Alberta governments. It also opens the door to Ottawa and Alberta providing more financial support for Canada's largest oil sands producers to cut their emissions and expand production.

Mr. McKenzie said Wednesday that the agreement "creates a framework for governments and industry to work together on production growth, emissions reduction and expanded market access."

However, he remains unimpressed that it also includes "an uncompetitive carbon tax" that he said "uniquely burdens Canadian industry." Mr. McKenzie has railed against industrial carbon pricing in the past, arguing that it does nothing to encourage the oil and gas sector to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions.

Still, the memorandum of understanding "represents meaningful progress towards creating a competitive investment environment" for the oil sands, he told analysts during an earnings call Wednesday morning.

"What matters most is this agreement signals a willingness to work together to grow the oil and gas sector for the benefit of all Canadians. This is an important step to getting our economy moving forward again," he said.

Although the MOU sets the conditions for production growth, Mr. McKenzie said Cenovus's approach to resource development will remain unchanged, including disciplined spending on capital projects.

The final policy details stemming from the MOU are due Nov. 15 – one month after an Alberta referendum on whether to hold a binding vote on separation from Canada. Prime Minister Mark Carney has made co-operating with Alberta and unleashing its energy sector with an expansion of its fossil fuel industry a key part of his case for the province remaining in Confederation.

Regardless of the details in that final agreement, Cenovus has already upped its annual production guidance to reflect a bumper crude output in the second quarter. The company averaged more than 970,000 barrels a day (b/d) from April through June, with production from its oil sands operations alone hitting more than 786,000 b/d.

Mr. McKenzie said the company is "well on track" to average more than one million b/d in July – the first month that the company has ever hit that number. As such, it has boosted its full-year production guidance by roughly 25,000 b/d to between 970,000 and 1,010,000 b/d.

The boost comes mainly from the company's oil sands operations, including its Narrows Lake project. Roughly 150 kilometres south of Fort McMurray, Alta., it is connected to the company's Christina Lake processing facility and produced first oil in July last year.

Mr. McKenzie said Narrows Lake "continues to exceed expectations" and is producing more than 8,000 b/d. Eventually, it is projected to produce 20,000 to 30,000 b/d.

"The growth we expected from Narrows Lake is coming much sooner than forecast. Notably, we reached the production rate we expected to get from the first five well pads from only the first four well pads," he said.

Production at the company's Foster Creek facility – roughly 350 kilometres northeast of Edmonton, in the Cold Lake oil sands region – was around 215,000 b/d, about 8,000 less than the prior quarter. Cenovus attributed that to "an unplanned disruption" at the site in late May.

The company's Sunrise facility, 60 kilometres northeast of Fort McMurray, reached its production target a year before its original 2027 date, and is regularly exceeding 70,000 b/d, Mr. McKenzie said.

Cenovus reported net earnings of $2.87-billion for the second quarter, compared with $851-million a year earlier.

Its total revenues were $17.4-billion in the second quarter, up from $12.4-billion in the first quarter of 2026.

MICROSOFT TOPS WALL STREET ESTIMATES FOR CLOUD GROWTH

Microsoft Corp. topped Wall Street estimates for quarterly cloud revenue growth on Wednesday, a sign its massive spending on AI infrastructure was paying off as capacity constraints ease and more businesses adopt the technology.

Revenue at the company's Azure cloud-computing business rose 43 per cent in its fiscal fourth quarter, compared with analysts' consensus estimate of 39.98 per cent, according to Visible Alpha.

Shares of Redmond, Wash.-based Microsoft were up about 3 per cent in extended trading.

"This year, Azure revenue surpassed US$100-billion for the first time, and Microsoft 365 Copilot reached over 30 million paid seats, reflecting the confidence customers are placing in us to power their AI transformation," chief executive officer Satya Nadella said.

The strong growth could ease some concerns on Microsoft, which has been under pressure owing to surging data-centre outlays and fears that AI tools could displace its long-reliable productivity software business.

It follows Google Cloud's blockbuster quarter, with the rival posting an 82-per-cent surge in cloud revenue last week, far ahead of market expectations.

Microsoft has forecast spending US$190-billion this calendar year, part of the more than US$700-billion in unprecedented Big Tech outlays that have strained the companies' cash flows and stoked fears of capacity overbuild.

Meanwhile, the company is cutting dependence on OpenAI's technology by adding Anthropic's models into its offerings and developing in-house AI, while leaning on its deep business ties to boost adoption of the US$30-a-month Copilot, including through deals such as the one with Accenture earlier this year.

REUTERS

Allied Gold's planned $5.5-billion sale to China's Zijin collapses

NIALL McGEE
MINING REPORTER

Canadian gold miner **Allied Gold Corp.** has called off its $5.5-billion takeover deal with Zijin Gold International Co. after the deal failed to win approval from China's foreign investment regulator within an acceptable time frame.

The transaction was originally supposed to close by May 29, but the target date was later pushed back to July 29, with Allied citing regulatory approvals and other closing conditions that had not been met.

Peter Marrone, the chief executive of Allied, told The Globe and Mail on Tuesday the revised deadline wasn't going to be met, in part because China had not yet approved the transaction. Allied, he added, was also dealing with a host of other issues important to the close, including settling tax matters, as well as finalizing streaming, lending and security arrangements.

In a news release on Wednesday morning, Allied attributed the termination of the acquisition to "broader external factors applicable to cross-border transactions of this scale."

Allied operates mines in Mali and Ivory Coast, producing about 375,000 ounces of gold a year, and is soon starting up a new mine in Ethiopia.

Shares in Allied fell by 18.6 per cent on the Toronto Stock Exchange on Wednesday to close at $24 apiece.

In an interview on Wednesday, Mr. Marrone said the failure to obtain approval from the regulator appears to be a big-picture policy decision in China, and not directly tied to his company.

He said he had made inquiries about how many mergers and acquisitions the regulator in China had approved in the past few months involving investment abroad by Chinese entities and Chinese nationals.

"The initial feedback that I have is that there's been no approvals in that period of time," he said. "That suggests to me that it's a policy decision, not a decision particular to our company, or to this transaction."

The National Development and Reform Commission in China, which regulates deals involving Chinese companies abroad, did not respond to a request for comment.

In May, the Financial Times, citing confidential sources, reported that the NDRC had raised concerns about the Allied deal, including both the premium being paid by Zijin and the geopolitical risks of operating in Mali.

But Mr. Marrone doesn't buy that thesis.

"We have seen no evidence that is supportive of any of that," he said.

In January, Zijin offered $44 a share in cash for Toronto-based Allied, which at the time represented an all-time high for the stock.

While Zijin will not acquire Allied, the Chinese miner plans to instead take a stake in the Canadian company. On Wednesday, Allied said that Zijin will acquire a 9.2-per-cent holding worth $417-million. Zijin will acquire approximately 12.8 million shares at $32.55 apiece, a 10.3-per-cent premium to Allied's closing price on the TSX on Tuesday.

Zijin Gold trades on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange and is a subsidiary of Zijin Mining Group Co. Ltd., which is partly state-owned by China.

While there was some concern early on that Canada might not approve the acquisition, Ottawa promptly cleared it both on national-security and net-benefit grounds. Allied shareholders also decisively voted in favour of the deal in March.

China has major influence over another big takeover involving a Canadian mining company.

One of the final impediments to Anglo American PLC's planned acquisition of Vancouver-based Teck Resources Ltd. is obtaining regulatory approval in China.

However, unlike the Zijin transaction with Allied, no Chinese mining companies are directly involved. Instead, authorities are scrutinizing the impact the Anglo Teck combination would have on China's copper supply. The State Administration for Market Regulation is determining whether too much power might be concentrated in one entity, and how that might affect China as a major buyer of the commodity.

Both Teck and Anglo last week said the deal remains on track to close between September, 2026, and March of next year. Teck CEO Jonathan Price said in a conference call last Thursday that SAMR's probe of the transaction is progressing normally, the company is responding to various requests as part of that process and Teck hasn't received "any requests for remedies arising from the approval process."

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OPINION & ANALYSIS

China is AI-maxxing and it has a lot to teach us

Open-source models, along with steps to address potential social harms are leading to more advancements and acceptance

JACOB COOKE

OPINION

Chief executive of WPIC Marketing + Technologies, a Beijing-based firm that advises global brands in Asian markets

People visit the Moonshot AI stand, featuring the Kimi K3 model, during the World Artificial Intelligence Conference in Shanghai earlier this month. HECTOR RETAMAL/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

There was another Sputnik moment with the recent release of Kimi K3, a cutting edge artificial intelligence model from the Chinese startup Moonshot AI.

Rivalling the performance of Anthropic and OpenAI's top models, Kimi K3 sent Silicon Valley into a frenzy, prompting allegations that Chinese firms are using American models to train their own.

But those allegations, unproven as of now, are not the most important part of the story. Neither is the mere fact that Chinese AI is approaching parity with American AI.

The real story is that China is putting forth a distinct framework for how AI should be diffused across society. Generally speaking, AI in China is open, low-cost, and application-focused. Meanwhile, Chinese firms and government agencies are taking pro-active steps to address potential social harms of AI.

It's a framework with significant merit.

The Kimi ecosystem is open weight. That means any company or developer can download Kimi, run it on local servers, and apply it to their specific needs. The same is true for models from Chinese players such as Alibaba, DeepSeek, Z.ai, MiniMax, and others. Firms monetize through adjacent services, like hosting or enterprise setup, but broadly speaking the technology is accessible.

On the other hand, America's frontier AI models are closed. Access is metered, and firms are shelling out enormous token fees to Anthropic, OpenAI, and Google.

Chinese models are generally more efficient than their American counterparts. U.S. limits on the sales of cutting edge Nvidia chips to China were intended to contain its AI development. Instead, these export restrictions forced Chinese labs to optimize for efficiency. Now, many Chinese models can achieve high performance at a fraction of the compute cost of American models.

> Chinese firms are not necessarily focused on creating AGI, but instead on developing capable models that can be diffused across the economy through applications.

Meanwhile, to meet skyrocketing token demand, the U.S. is building out data centres at a historic scale. That is straining electricity grids, inspiring local opposition, and damaging the environment.

Another difference centres on the pursuit of artificial general intelligence, or AGI. Silicon Valley firms are pouring billions into achieving superintelligence. Sky-high capital expenditure has rendered American AI models largely unprofitable, despite high fees. These firms' enormous valuations are based on a bet that achieving AGI in the future would pay enormous dividends. But even if that bet pays off, the winnings would accrue to a narrow few, according to Adam Tooze, an economic historian and a professor at Columbia University.

Chinese firms are not necessarily focused on creating AGI, but instead on developing capable models that can be diffused across the economy through applications. The lower cost of Chinese models, combined with their open weight nature, allows other companies to build customized apps that run on local servers. As Alibaba's chairman Joseph Tsai said last year, open source allows businesses, individuals, and entrepreneurs to innovate with AI, rather than AI staying concentrated in a few dominant players.

Here's how that can work in practice. My firm helps overseas consumer brands enter the market in China. We've used Kimi and Alibaba's Qwen to build our own applications that run on our own servers. These applications help manage e-commerce stores, optimize delivery logistics, and execute marketing campaigns. To do this with American AI's proprietary models would have been prohibitively expensive for many companies. Businesses across the economy in China are embracing AI in this fashion, and the efficiency gains are more widely enjoyed.

The divergence also extends to public sentiment. According to Stanford's 2026 AI Index, 83 per cent of people in China see AI as more beneficial than harmful, versus just 39 per cent of Americans. Much of the public conversation in China focuses not on job losses but on concrete gains. For example, AI-powered robots could ease staffing shortages in the China health care sector in the next few years.

That positive sentiment likely stems in part from the Chinese public and private sectors getting ahead of AI's potential externalities. That was made clear at the World AI Conference in Shanghai, which ran from July 17 to 20, when China's President Xi Jinping insisted that AI must serve humanity and called for precise oversight of any negative consequences.

In China, new rules this month banned AI "companion" services for minors. Chinese courts have ruled that a company cannot dismiss workers to replace them with AI. The e-commerce giant JD.com has pledged to retrain its staff even as the company pushes to automate warehouses with AI.

China's framework – AI as accessible, low-cost, and focused on positive applications, with guardrails around employment and other negative externalities – is perhaps best suited to meeting this moment.

We need more government incentives for older adults to keep working

THOMAS KLASSEN

OPINION

Professor in the School of Public Policy and Administration at York University

Canadians who reach the age of 65 will live longer than ever – another 21 years, of which 15 are in good health. They are also retiring later than ever. The average retirement age is 65.4, while a generation ago it was 61, according to data from Statistics Canada.

Government policy has provided Canadians with some incentive to stay in the workforce for longer by lessening the link between retirement and pension eligibility. Retirement benefits from the Canada Pension Plan can be delayed from 60 to any age up to 70, with higher benefits for each year that it's delayed. The Old Age Security benefit can be pushed from 65 to any age up to 70. If not paid until age 70, recipients will receive one-third more in benefits than at 65.

Canadians at 60 can receive CPP and remain employed. At 65, they can simultaneously receive CPP and OAS benefits while continuing to earn employment income, or they can choose not the receive one or both of the benefits. They can also contribute to an employer pension and to registered retirement savings plans until they reach 71.

Yet, there are still barriers to the labour market participation of older workers. Many provinces allow employers to impose a mandatory retirement age of 65 if the workplace has a pension plan. Labour and human rights legislation permit employers to exclude workers 65 and over from health care, disability and life insurance benefits. The regulations that govern workers' compensation schemes continue to assume that employees retire at 65.

At present, workers can no longer contribute to their employer pension or RRSP once they reach 71, but must then begin to receive pension payments and withdraw funds from their registered retirement income funds. The Canadian Association of Retired Persons and various pension industry groups have long called for the elimination of mandatory withdrawals from RRIFs at any age, or the option to delay those withdrawals until 75. Doing so would provide older people, whether employed or retired, with greater control of their retirement savings.

In adjusting and modernizing employment regulations governing older workers, policy makers must allow individuals to make their own choices, rather than dictating solutions.

The Harper government's ill-fated policy to raise the eligibility age of the OAS to 67 is a textbook example of what not to do. Limiting access to a benefit, especially one aimed at retired people with fixed income, was both poor politics and policy. The Trudeau government promptly reversed the age increase once it assumed office. A wiser policy has been to keep the age of eligibility at 65, but provide the option – and incentives – for individuals to delay receiving benefits.

A major reason that Canadians are now working longer is that two decades ago, governments across the country eliminated mandatory retirement at 65 for most employees. This reform did not compel employees to work longer, but rather provided flexibility to do so if they wished. At that time, some observers predicted that if workers no longer must retire, fewer jobs would be available for young people. This has not occurred.

The youth unemployment rate has been slightly lower during times when average retirement ages increased, and higher when retirement ages decreased. In other words, the increase in retirement age over the past decades has not been detrimental to younger workers.

Politicians should consider policy reforms that are targeted to specific groups of workers, since retirement age varies by sector. On average, self-employed workers retire at 68.4, those in the private sector retire at 66, and public-sector workers at 62.6. Public sector employees will be most impacted by reforms to defined benefit pension plans meant to provide options and incentives for later retirement. Those changes would be less consequential for those in the private sector, or self-employed workers who typically do not have such plans.

Women live longer than men and are at greater risk of facing poverty in old age because of lower lifetime earnings from employment – often stemming from leaving the labour force because of caregiving duties. Women, in particular, may benefit from reforms to how the CPP calculates time away from work because of young children. Reforms to OAS, with the aim of encouraging older people to earn employment income, can also be considered.

The age of 65 is no longer the marker between work and retirement. The boundary between receiving employment income and pension income is more porous today than in the past. By working longer than the past generation, Canadians are calling into question some of the assumptions about both work and retirement, while supporting the country's economic growth.

Governments can do more to ensure that older Canadians have options for their retirement or employment, or some combination of both. Additional incentives for those interested and able to work longer are positive steps for individual Canadians and the economy.

Can fixing development charges fix Canada's housing crisis?

ANDREW SANCTON

OPINION

Fellow-in-residence at C.D. Howe Institute and a professor emeritus, department of political science, at Western University

The federal government's introduction of the Canada-Ontario Development Charge Reduction Program, and a new partnership with British Columbia to lower municipally levied development charges for multi-unit housing, represent a promising step toward addressing these fees, but come with key issues.

Under the Ontario agreement, the federal and provincial governments will finance approved infrastructure projects in municipalities that lower development charges for all residential types by 30 to 50 per cent for at least three years. The B.C. agreement is aimed at lowering development charges by up to 50 per cent in priority communities, though implementation details, including what qualifies as "multi-unit housing," are still unclear.

The agreements, both funded through the federal Build Communities Strong Fund, are intended to reduce the cost of new housing amid an affordability crisis. Ontario and B.C. have the highest development charges in the country (more than $100,000 a residence in many municipalities in the Greater Toronto Area, and more than $50,000 in Metro Vancouver). But there are three main issues with these agreements, especially as they apply in Ontario.

The first is that they seem manifestly unfair to recent purchasers of new housing. Imagine having bought a new house for $800,000 in Milton, Ont., in 2025. Included in the cost was more than $100,000 in development charges, originally paid to the municipality by the developer. This cost was absorbed by the owner's mortgage, meaning that they have borrowed money to pay for the cost of future municipal infrastructure required by the new subdivision in which their new home is located.

After the Canada-Ontario agreement is implemented, similar houses in a new adjacent subdivision should be selling for tens of thousands of dollars less, depending on the municipality, provided lower construction costs are passed on to buyers. With similar, less costly houses for sale nearby, the value of the home purchased in 2025 will decline.

Everyone takes a financial risk when they purchase a new home, but few would expect to lose money as a direct result of a new government program aimed at helping purchasers of new houses. It is true, of course, that if an owner is able to hold on to the home for many years, the gap in home values might erode. But we all know that life, especially for young families, is rarely so stable.

The second problem with the agreements is that taxpayers in areas of the country where development charges are not levied end up subsidizing new local infrastructure in prosperous places such as the Greater Toronto Area and Metro Vancouver. The main reason these other areas do not levy development charges is precisely because they are less prosperous; such areas are not going to levy charges on developers trying to build new housing.

Greater Montreal is a prime example of a growing major Canadian metropolitan area in which development charges are either non-existent or very low. Here, municipalities, including the City of Montreal, borrow funds to build new local infrastructure. That is why they are far more indebted than municipalities in Toronto or Vancouver.

When residents of these municipalities pay their property taxes, they pay to service the debt taken on by their municipality. When these same residents pay their federal taxes, a portion of these funds will now go to pay for new local infrastructure in Toronto and Vancouver. These funding agreements fall under the umbrella of the federal Build Communities Strong Fund, but equal provincial repartition is not guaranteed.

The third problem is that the agreements require the federal and provincial governments to get into the business of choosing which municipal infrastructure projects merit funding. No one can possibly believe that the potential involvement of three levels of government is likely to promote overall public-sector efficiency and effectiveness.

The prospect of bureaucrats from the province or federal government poring over submissions pleading for funds for new wastewater plants, local roads, libraries and fire stations is concerning, especially when we consider that such submissions will presumably be coming from some of the country's largest and most sophisticated municipalities. This comes after many years of attempting to disentangle the affairs of such municipalities from the grip of so-called senior levels of government.

The long-term solution is to gradually reduce development charges by expanding municipal borrowing, which is constrained by provincial legislation and municipal fiscal rules, and using financing tools to spread infrastructure costs over time. It would mean that all municipal taxpayers, rather than just the purchasers of new homes and renters in new buildings, would eventually pay for the cost of new growth-related local infrastructure.

This is the way it was 50 years ago before fast-growing municipalities conveniently stumbled into the development-charge trap. It's time to return to a system that spreads these costs more fairly.

Supplies of whey protein, which used to be part of a niche market, mostly for athletes and body builders, have tightened as mainstream corporate actors also seek to capitalize on the trend. BRANDON BELL/GETTY IMAGES

Protein: Online influencers are pushing diets high in animal proteins, from red meat to dairy

FROM B1

In fact, the supply of dairy solids – which includes a wide range of dairy proteins made during the processing of milk – has at times outpaced global demand, driving trade disputes between Canada and the U.S.

After decades of stable growth for dairy proteins, the global market had started to plateau in 2021 as China shored up its national production and its major supplier – New Zealand – encroached on U.S. market share in other countries.

The U.S. Dairy Export Council alleged that Canadian producers were making matters worse by dumping low-priced dairy proteins into export markets, including the U.S.

Canada's processors were at an unfair advantage because the supply management system meant they could sell these products at cheap, uncompetitive rates, the U.S. industry alleged in arguments submitted to the U.S. International Trade Tribunal.

Under the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, Canada agreed to limit tariff-free exports of skim milk powder, milk protein concentrate and infant formula. But the U.S. Dairy Export Council alleged that processors had simply started adding these proteins to different products, effectively disguising the byproduct as another item in order to bypass export restrictions.

"Canada has used loopholes to evade USMCA disciplines on dairy protein exports," a statement from the U.S. Dairy Export Council said shortly after Mr. Trump announced the tariffs this month.

But the latest stage of this dispute is taking effect in a market very different to when the dispute first began.

The U.S. and Canada are in the midst of a global protein craze in large part because of weight-loss drugs like Ozempic, Prof. Fabek said. These medications can result in a loss of muscle mass. Doctors and dietitians are recommending high-protein diets as a way to retain lean muscle mass. And dairy proteins are considered "complete": They have the full chain of amino acids, in the correct order, and they are fully digestible.

Protein has also been politicized – tied to resurgent conservative ideas about food and gender, said Elaine Power, a dietitian and professor at Queen's University where she studies food and health.

The rise of conservative politics and the delegitimization of left-wing ideology have shifted consumer preferences. Online influencers are pushing diets high in animal proteins, from red meat to dairy.

The trend has been reflected in the Trump administration's policies on health and nutrition, she added, pointing to the U.S.'s updated dietary guidelines.

In January, Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. flipped the national food pyramid upside down – recommending a diet high in protein, specifically red meat and dairy. The new recommendations almost doubled the protein intake to a range of 1.2 to 1.6 grams a kilogram of body weight.

There are strong commercial interests behind the gendered fitness and wellness movement, said Emma Grundtvig Gram, a public-health researcher at the University of Copenhagen who has studied the effects of male fitness influencers on consumer trends.

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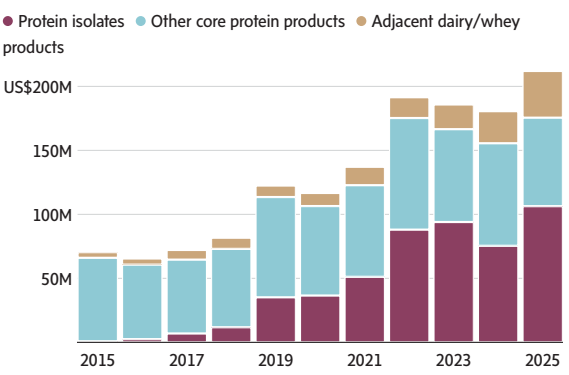
A number of the high-profile fitness influencers who were key proponents of the Trump administration have founded, owned or advertised on behalf of supplement companies that sell dairy-based protein powders. A prominent example is Onnit Labs Inc., co-founded by Joe Rogan, a popular and controversial podcast host who endorsed Mr. Trump shortly before the 2024 U.S. election. (Mr. Rogan's support for Mr. Trump has wavered since this endorsement.)

Supplies of whey protein, which used to be part of a niche market, mostly for athletes and body builders, have tightened as mainstream corporate actors also seek to capitalize on the trend, Prof. Power said.

U.S. imports of Canadian protein products hit by Section 338 tariffs

In U.S. dollars, by year



Other core protein includes whey and milk protein concentrates, edible gelatin, peptones and albumins. Adjacent products include other natural milk constituents, cream powder, fluid whey and other dried whey

THE GLOBE AND MAIL, SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, WHITE HOUSE

The number of high-protein shakes and drinks on the market rose by 122 per cent between 2020 and 2024, according to a report from Innova Market Insights, and brands from Starbucks to Buffalo Wild Wings have launched high-protein lines. The latter introduced an "espresso proteini" in March – a beverage with 10 grams of protein and a Buffalo Dry Rub rim.

The average U.S. supermarket now stocks upward of 38,000 products that advertise protein content, according to the Associated Press, citing a market firm research report from NielsenIQ.

Large food and beverage companies moving into this space have been bad news for those who have been marketing whey protein from before the protein-maxxing moment. For example, producer of high-protein baking and beverage mixes, HelloAmino, was cut off from its supplies of whey protein at the beginning of May. The Alberta-based company had been marketing high-protein products since before the current trend took off, founder Aelie Swift said.

"Literally no one wants to do business with us," she said. "If you're not ordering a million-dollar truckload, you can't even get a hold of someone."

HelloAmino has pivoted to a different dairy protein formulation, but it is costing them 50 per cent more to get supplies.

And whey producers will not be able to scale up production quickly.

Because whey is a byproduct of cheese production, a processor cannot increase production without the risk of flooding the cheese market, Prof. Fabek said. Processors will instead be focusing on ways to get more protein from every litre of liquid milk, but these investments take time.

"Since every kilogram of cheese generates a certain amount of liquid whey, there needs to be a demand for both, and that's where you're finding a big issue and a big challenge."

With reports from Jason Kirby

CPKC PROFITS DIP DESPITE BUMPER GRAIN CROP FUELLING HIGHER REVENUES

Canadian Pacific Kansas City Ltd. says profits dipped in its latest quarter even as revenues shot up on the back of a bumper grain crop.

The Calgary-based railway says net income nudged down nearly 2 per cent to $1.02-billion in the three months ended June 30 compared with $1.23-billion in the same period a year earlier.

Second-quarter revenues rose 13 per cent year-over-year to $4.16-billion from $3.70-billion.

CPKC says diluted earnings per share fell to $1.15 from $1.33 a share a year earlier.

Revenues from grain – the railway's largest segment – rose by nearly a quarter from the year before while container revenues jumped 11 per cent.

Chief executive Keith Creel says leveraging the company's status as the only freight railway to span all three countries in North America is paying off.

In a separate release, the company announced the retirement of board chair Isabelle Courville, who took the helm in May, 2019, to become the first woman to chair a major North American freight railway, effective Wednesday.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

BoC policy makers split on scope of recent economic rebound: minutes

Bank held benchmark rate steady at 2.25% on July 15, and deliberations show officials growing more confident in the economy

CRAIG LORD OTTAWA

Members of the Bank of Canada's governing council were split over how sustainable a recent economic rebound could be, deliberations from the central bank's rate decision earlier this month show.

The Bank of Canada held its benchmark interest rate steady at 2.25 per cent for a sixth straight time at its decision on July 15. Minutes tracking governing council's discussions heading into that announcement were released Wednesday.

The deliberations show officials were growing more confident in the economy during the second quarter after a year of flat growth.

Higher global oil prices and signs of a recovery in the housing market were supporting growth over the previous three months, the governing council noted. Surveys of businesses and a recent pickup in exports, meanwhile, suggested firms were adapting to tariffs and persistent trade uncertainty from the United States.

The Bank of Canada's July rate decision and updated forecasts came before Washington's latest threat of 50-per-cent tariffs on a range of Canadian goods, though governing council noted in its meetings that "the possibility of new U.S. tariffs was an ever-present downside risk to growth."

> The central bank expects real gross domestic product rose 2.5 per cent on an annualized basis last quarter, and is forecasting modest growth to continue through the second half of the year and into 2027.

The central bank expects real gross domestic product rose 2.5 per cent on an annualized basis last quarter, and is forecasting modest growth to continue through the second half of the year and into 2027.

Monetary policy makers were "confident" about the second-quarter rebound, the meeting minutes showed, "but there was a range of views among governing council members about the sustainability of the rebound beyond the near term."

"Members agreed they would need to monitor the data closely for signs that growth was broadening as projected in the July report," the report read.

Though inflation ticked up to 3.2 per cent in May, there were few signs inflation was spreading beyond the gas pumps. More recent data showed the annual rate of inflation eased to 2.8 per cent in June as the prospect of peace between the United States and Iran helped cool price pressures.

Bank of Canada officials have been clear in recent months that monetary policy faces a dilemma with the war in Iran pushing some prices higher at the same time U.S. trade pressures hamper the economy. Those forces normally push the policy rate in opposite directions, leaving monetary policy makers somewhat stuck.

Governing council agreed in their July deliberations that with inflation pressures abating and growth picking up, "the trade-off facing monetary policy had diminished."

Renewed hostilities in the Middle East in recent weeks underscored the governing council's view that inflation risks are still potent, however.

"If oil prices increased and were to stay higher, spillovers to other prices could increase, raising the risk that inflation would broaden. Such a scenario would likely require a monetary policy response," the summary of deliberations read.

Most economists still expect the Bank of Canada to keep its policy rate on hold for the rest of the year.

Statistics Canada is set to report its early estimate for second-quarter growth alongside the May GDP figures on Friday.

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DIVIDENDS

Dividend
Computershare

Notice is hereby given that the following dividend has been declared.
All amounts shown are in Canadian dollars unless otherwise specified.

Issuer	Issue	Record Date	Payable Date	Rate
Waste Connections, Inc.	Common	Aug. 6, 2026	Aug. 20, 2026	$0.35 US

Fed: Many policy makers predict scope for inflation will decelerate later in 2026

FROM B1

Officials are also dealing with booming demand for products tied to the sharp rise in artificial-intelligence investment. Supply has yet to catch up, leading to higher prices on items such as semi-conductors, computer chips and servers, along with high demand for electricians and carpenters.

The debate at the Fed centres on how quickly inflation will ease from here as some of these temporary factors fade, and whether rate increases will ultimately be necessary to get inflation to return to target.

Mr. Warsh, who presided over his second meeting as chair of the central bank, owns the outcome.

Since taking the reins in May from Jerome Powell, who is now a Fed governor, Mr. Warsh has staked his reputation on vanquishing inflation. He has been explicit that officials have "no tolerance" for elevated inflation, and that evidence of cooling conditions in the latest Consumer Price Index report from June does not amount to "mission accomplished." That report showed that overall consumer prices were 3.5 per cent higher in June than a year earlier, down from a 4.2-per-cent annual rate in May.

Mr. Warsh, speaking at a news conference Wednesday, was on the defensive as he was pressed to explain how keeping rates steady was compatible with his "price stability" pledge. He opened the news conference by saying that "where necessary and appropriate, we will not hesitate to act." He pushed back on the idea that the Fed was on "pause" at this meeting and he repeatedly stressed that there was "nothing inertial" about the Fed's discussion, its policy or its strategy.

Until this point, however, Mr. Warsh has not specified how exactly he will make good on his inflation pledge. When asked at congressional hearings this month how the Fed would tame inflation, he stipulated that the central bank would assert its commitment to getting it down, take responsibility for any failure in doing so and study the policy tools at its disposal.

When asked specifically about the effectiveness of the Fed's tools and whether higher rates were the best remedy to tackle inflation, Mr. Warsh said Wednesday that this was one tool that "could well be part of that solution, but I wouldn't say it's in isolation."

Mr. Warsh instead homed in on recent gyrations in financial markets, most notably the rise in yields on inflation-adjusted government bonds. The recent tightening of financial conditions, which capture the availability of credit across the economy, provided the Fed "some comfort that we've got the ability and capability to deliver," he said.

As Mr. Warsh spoke, longer dated Treasury yields rose sharply, with the 30-year bond closing in on its May peak of 5.2 per cent. That was the highest level since 2007. The rise in the 30-year Treasury yield suggests some worry about Mr. Warsh's ability to tackle inflation in the long run.

The case for leaving rates unchanged hinges on an assumption that the Fed can afford to be patient before making a move. Many policy makers see scope for inflation to decelerate in the second half of the year. By the next meeting in September, the Fed will have two more months of data in hand. Moreover, the public has not yet lost confidence in the Fed's ability to eventually reach its goal, as evidenced by a range of metrics tracking inflation expectations. Mr. Warsh on Wednesday clarified that price stability means returning inflation, as measured by the Personal Consumption Expenditures Price Index, to 2 per cent.

"There is no soft implicit target, not on this committee's watch," he said. "There's only a target, and it's 2 per cent."

Traders are now pricing in a rate increase for December and have dialled back expectations for a September move.

A rate rise later this year will no doubt anger Mr. Trump, who tapped Mr. Warsh for the job. The President has long wanted the central bank to lower rates. After Wednesday's decision, Mr. Trump laid the blame on Mr. Warsh's colleagues, who vote alongside the chair on policy decisions.

"I know he'd love to see lower interest rates, but he's got a board, and it's a political board, and they want to keep rates up," the President said.

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

U.S. Federal Reserve chair Kevin Warsh on Wednesday clarified that price stability means returning inflation, as measured by the Personal Consumption Expenditures Price Index, to 2 per cent. WIN McNAMEE/GETTY IMAGES

TECHNOLOGY

Looking to the future

Members of the public test Rokid smart glasses during the product's official launch at Venture X offices in Richmond Hill, Ont., on July 22. The glasses allow the wearer to switch between AI assistants

EDUARDO LIMA/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

Unions: USW members mostly work in industries that would be hit hard by Section 338 tariffs

FROM B1

"Our priority must be to align our trade policies to address the challenges posed by unfair and predatory trade practices of countries like China, not to drive a further wedge between our nations."

On July 20, the White House announced sweeping new tariffs on nearly US$20-billion worth of Canadian goods. Mr. Trump invoked Section 338 of the Depression-era Tariff Act, which has never previously been used, to issue the tariffs on Canada, in retaliation for what his administration considers "discrimination" against imports of U.S. autos, alcohol and dairy. The levies would affect Canadian exports of machinery, electronics, mechanical equipment, plastic and rubber products, among other items.

USW International represents approximately 850,000 workers across the United States and Canada, mostly employed in metals, mining, pulp and paper, rubber, chemicals and auto supplies – all industries that will be hit hard by the Section 338 tariffs.

But while its Canadian counterpart, USW Canada, has been consistent in its opposition to Mr. Trump's tariffs since the onset of the trade war in early 2025, the American chapter of the union has on multiple occasions come out in support of tariffs as a tool to rebalance trade relationships.

Specifically, USW has championed the White House's use of tariffs to curtail China's alleged steel dumping, an unfair trade practice where foreign manufacturers sell steel products in a country at depressed prices to undercut local markets. The union – like Mr. Trump – is also vehemently opposed to maintaining the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement in its current form, arguing that it exacerbated the outsourcing of auto parts production to Mexico and failed to compel corporations to raise wages of Mexican workers. (USW also represents auto parts workers.)

U.S. Steel employees walk to greet company and government officials at an investment announcement in June at the company's Edgar Thomson Plant in Braddock, Pa. STEPHANIE STRASBURG/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Indeed, some USW members in the U.S. have allied themselves closely with Mr. Trump because of his trade policies, believing that tariffs will restore job security to the country's manufacturing heartland. The group Steelworkers for Trump, led by USW member Brian Pavlack, has garnered thousands of supporters in the past two years, and is frequently featured at Mr. Trump's rallies.

The country's biggest auto union, United Auto Workers, has also championed Mr. Trump's tariffs, seeing them as a means of bringing well-paying unionized jobs back to the U.S., even if it is at the expense of Canadian jobs.

According to Marty Warren, USW Canada's national director, his union has lost between 1,500 and 2,000 members over the past year as a result of Mr. Trump's trade war. "We are still hanging on, but the real threat is the insecurity that is felt in so many of our workplaces because of the unresolved CUSMA dispute with the U.S.," he told The Globe and Mail in an interview, using another name for the USMCA.

Mr. Warren said the Canadian union's relationship with its American leadership is strong, and both unions are allied in their opposition to Section 338 tariffs. "As Roxanne Brown said, Canada is not the problem, and we should be working together as two countries trying to stop the offshoring of jobs."

If new tariffs do take effect on Aug. 19, Mr. Warren anticipates that USW workers in the forestry sector – representing roughly 14,000 jobs – will be most affected, given that the tariffs extend to plywood, particleboard, veneer and some paper goods. "Many of these jobs are in remote communities, so holding that job is everything to them," he said.

Other major Canadian unions have voiced their opposition to the Section 338 tariffs. In a July 21 statement, Unifor national president Lana Payne said the tariffs were intended to inflict economic damage on Canada and force governments into making concessions during trade negotiations. Unifor also represents workers in industries targeted by tariffs, including autos, forestry, manufacturing and paper products, and those not targeted by tariffs, such as potash, energy and critical minerals.

"The targets Trump exempted reveal his hand. He knows that despite his bluster, the U.S. does need things from Canada," Ms. Payne said.

Recession: After factoring in inflation, some GTA markets saw price declines of 40%

FROM B1

For at least a decade, the end was perpetually nigh upon us. Canada's housing market was heavily showcased as among the world's most inflated.

And then finally, it happened, courtesy of a sharp rise in interest rates that, up to that point, seemed like a thing of the past.

At last, the housing market fell. The sky did not.

Certain regions were hammered. After factoring in inflation, some markets in the Greater Toronto Area saw price declines of about 40 per cent.

While the Canadian economy stagnated, to be sure, it never came close to a proper recession. There are several reasons why.

The downturn was largely a necessary unwinding of the excesses in Canadian housing during the pandemic, said Benjamin Tal, deputy chief economist at Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce.

"Prices are now where they would have been if COVID was only a bad dream," he said.

"The adjustment is simply undoing a crazy period when people where blinded by low rates and prices went up totally detached from fundamentals."

Other forces helped to offset the pain of the housing slump. Gains in disposable income in the few years prior to the housing market peak helped Canadian consumers manage higher mortgage payments. And the booming stock market kept household wealth at record highs despite falling property values.

"Interestingly enough, Canadians have probably directed more investment dollars into financial markets since real estate, as an investment class, died temporarily when the correction began," said Robert Kavcic, senior economist with Bank of Montreal.

Still, it seems like a minor miracle for Canada to have largely absorbed what could have been a domestic economic shock.

Homeowners and lenders alike avoided the "mortgage-renewal cliff" that many feared awaited those renewing at much higher interest rates.

The big banks managed their exposure well, while few borrowers resorted to defaulting.

Lots of Canadian construction workers avoided unemployment by pivoting to infrastructure projects, Mr. Tal added. And most of the big developers were strong enough to wait out the slump.

A similar narrative has played out globally the past few years, in ways big and small. Predictors of recession flash red, then everything turns out fine. The inversion of the yield curve and sharp downturns in survey data are two examples. A few years ago, it was widely thought that only a global recession could quell runaway inflation.

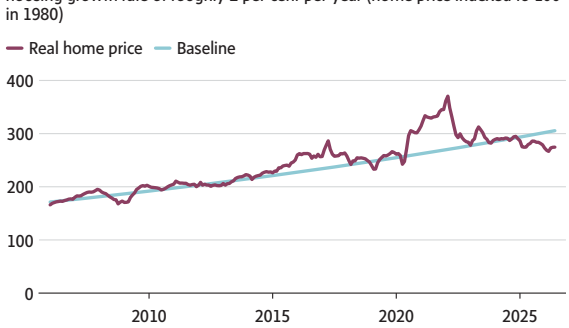
Many feared U.S. President Donald Trump's tariffs would trigger another major inflationary wave. Or that the blocking of the Strait of Hormuz would torpedo the global economy.

In all cases, the outcome was better than expected. Companies rerouted supply chains to avoid tariffs or bottlenecks, borrowers managed higher interest rates to avoid defaulting, consumers shifted to cheaper alternatives to withstand inflation.

The economy has been battle-tested. Perhaps that's made it better at weathering the shocks that once would have cascaded into recession.

The boom and bust of Canadian housing

Inflation-adjusted national average home price compared to long-term baseline housing growth rate of roughly 2 per cent per year (home price indexed to 100 in 1980)



THE GLOBE AND MAIL, SOURCE: BMO CAPITAL MARKETS

Sanctions bill would give Trump new tariff powers

Legislation would restore trade authorities that the Supreme Court stripped away when it ruled against President's levy use

ALAN RAPPEPORT WASHINGTON

The sanctions legislation that moved forward in the U.S. Senate this week goes beyond enacting new financial restrictions on Russia and Iran. It also gives President Donald Trump broad new powers to impose tariffs on imports from some of the world's largest economies.

The bipartisan bill, which was designed by the late senator Lindsey Graham, a Republican from South Carolina, was intended to demonstrate that Congress is unified in its desire to punish Russia for its invasion of Ukraine and to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. But tucked inside the legislation are tools that would give the Trump administration sweeping discretion to impose steep tariffs on major buyers of Russian energy products. The measure would restore some of the trade authorities that the Supreme Court stripped away when it ruled against Mr. Trump's use of tariffs on national-security grounds earlier this year.

It if becomes law, the bill would allow Mr. Trump to impose 500-per-cent tariffs on Russian imports, which include mostly fertilizers, and tariffs as high as 100 per cent on the largest importers of Russian oil and gas. Countries that help Russia evade sanctions could also face tariffs as high as 100 per cent.

The policy could lead to additional levies on billions of dollars' worth of products imported from China, India and European Union countries.

The bill represents the latest move by Congress to cede more of its authority over trade policy to Mr. Trump. It also comes amid bipartisan anger over the President's provocative use of tariffs, which has led to retaliation from other countries and uncertainty for businesses.

Scott Lincicome, a trade expert at the free-markets-oriented Cato Institute, said that some of the key language in the legislation is murky and that Mr. Trump has shown he will push the limits of his tariff powers.

"The President has demonstrated repeatedly that he is willing to exploit any ambiguity in a tariff statute that lets him impose additional import taxes," Mr. Lincicome said. "When you're dealing with Trump, you should be extremely reluctant to give him new tariff powers."

Despite last-minute changes to reduce the potential impact of the tariffs on American companies, the bill leaves room for the White House to interpret who are the biggest buyers of Russian energy products, which could open the door to a more expansive use of tariffs.

The legislation also gives Mr. Trump, who has at times been reluctant to punish Russia with sanctions, the leeway not to impose them by issuing a waiver and providing Congress with an explanation of why he believes an exemption is in the national interest. The President has argued that he needs flexibility when it comes to tariffs and sanctions when negotiating with other countries.

The potential for Mr. Trump to gain more power to unilaterally impose tariffs has rattled industries that were already struggling to cope with the gyrations of his trade agenda. Over the past year, Mr. Trump has continuously added, adjusted and removed tariffs as he sought to gain negotiating leverage with American trading partners. That has left companies struggling to plan how to source the products they buy and how to set their prices.

As they rushed to finalize the bill ahead of Mr. Graham's funeral Tuesday, lawmakers met resistance from lobbyists who are anxious about giving Mr. Trump more tariff authority.

"The potential of new, broad, 100-per-cent tariffs on imports from secondary countries risks raising costs for American businesses, workers and consumers," a group of nearly two dozen trade associations wrote in a letter to Senator John Thune of South Dakota, the Republican majority leader, and Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, the Democratic minority leader.

"Tariffs of this scale would increase costs for everyday consumer goods, manufacturing inputs and other products while creating significant uncertainty for companies making sourcing, pricing and inventory decisions months in advance."

The lobbying groups include the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Retail Industry Leaders Association and the National Foreign Trade Council. They asked lawmakers to remove the tariff authority in the bill and warned that tariffs were "a blunt tool that can penalize law-abiding U.S. companies."

The fate of the bill in the House is unclear, as some top Democrats have already expressed opposition to giving Mr. Trump more tariff authority. However, the bipartisan support in the Senate suggests that it could pass. Still, some Senate Democrats have also expressed reservations.

"I do not think tariffs, which are paid for by American businesses and consumers, will help Ukraine win this war," Senator Maggie Hassan, a Democrat from New Hampshire, wrote on social media after the vote. "And over the last year, it's become more clear that President Trump will use any legal – or illegal – mechanism to make families pay his reckless tariffs."

A White House official said that the bill was the result of months of negotiations among federal agencies, the White House and lawmakers and that it reflected bipartisan national-security and foreign-policy objectives.

Late changes to the Senate version of the bill were intended to restrict some of the potential impact on America's trading partners. Only the top five importers of Russian oil or gas are eligible to be hit with U.S. tariffs. Countries that take significant steps to reduce their purchases of Russian oil and gas could have their tariff rates reduced or eliminated.

Ben Harris, a former Treasury Department official in the Biden administration who helped design its policy to cap the price of Russian oil, said that he was encouraged to see bipartisan legislation that could compel the Trump administration to punish more Russian shadow fleet tankers and tighten enforcement of existing sanctions.

But with energy prices remaining volatile because of the conflict in Iran and Mr. Trump continuing to express mixed messages about Russia, it is not clear how the President would wield new sanctions and tariff powers if he gets them.

"The Trump administration has a terrible record with respect to sanctioning Russia's oil industry to date," Mr. Harris said. "It's been unclear what their objective has been from the get-go."

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

Deutsche Bank reported a 10-per-cent jump in quarterly profits, defying expectations for a drop, as strength at its global investment banking division offset a rise in expenses. KIRILL KUDRYAVTSEV/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

European bank rally rolls on as UBS, Deutsche Bank report profit jump

TOM SIMS FRANKFURT
ARIANE LUTHI ZURICH
TOMMY REGGIORI WILKES LONDON

Deutsche Bank AG and **UBS Group AG** beat forecasts again with second-quarter earnings on Wednesday, buoyed by a surge in trading activity and strong retail business as Europe's lenders extend a more than two-year-long recovery.

In a busy day for bank results, Standard Chartered PLC also delivered forecast-surpassing numbers and lifted its full-year income target on the back of surging revenue in wealth and global banking.

European banks have enjoyed a remarkable resurgence in the past 2½ years after more than a decade of rock-bottom interest rates and concerns about euro zone government debt, which soured investor sentiment toward their stocks.

The sector is now one of the best performing in Europe, with the STOXX Europe Banks index at its highest since late 2007 and up 143 per cent since early 2024, as higher rates boost interest income and loan demand swells despite continued weakness of the region's economy.

Germany's biggest bank reported a 10-per-cent jump in second-quarter profit, defying expectations for a drop, as strength at Deutsche's global investment banking division offset a rise in expenses.

Some of its competitors reported stronger gains owing to a trading boom in the wake of the Iran war and blockbuster initial public offerings.

Still, Wednesday's results extend a nearly uninterrupted return to quarterly profit over recent years, as chief executive officer Christian Sewing stabilized one of the world's most significant banks. Revenue growth during the second quarter at Deutsche's fixed income and currencies division even surpassed Wall Street rivals. JPMorgan Chase analysts called the results "strong across the board," and shares rose 2 per cent.

UBS booked a 17-per-cent jump in second-quarter profit that also beat expectations, and said it planned to buy back shares worth US$3-billion by the middle of next year.

Switzerland's biggest bank, which is waiting for clarity on new capital rules that could shape its future, said that amid robust broad-based growth its trading division delivered record second-quarter revenue.

"While the year is not over, we are close to achieving the same level of profitability UBS had prior to the acquisition," chief executive Sergio Ermotti said, referring to UBS's 2023 emergency takeover of local rival Credit Suisse.

In some cases, investors look beyond headline figures.

Britain's Barclays PLC reported a 17-per-cent rise in first-half profit on Tuesday, better than expected, but shares dropped as analysts said its equities performance undershot market expectations while costs came in higher.

France's BNP Paribas last week also beat forecasts with a 33-per-cent year-on-year profit rise in the second quarter.

Domestically focused retail lenders, such as Britain's National Westminster Bank, Italy's Intesa Sanpaolo SPA and Spain's CaixaBank SA have also seen their shares recover dramatically.

Despite their sustained rally, European lenders are worth a fraction of their Wall Street rivals. JPMorgan is closing in on a US$1-trillion valuation, while the most valuable European lenders today are HSBC Holdings PLC and Santander Bank NA, worth £266-billion ($499-billion) and €180-billion ($289-billion), respectively. European banks remain valued far below U.S. lenders, based on a price-to-book value – a common measure of valuing banks.

The region's lenders are also constrained by regulation and political resistance to cross-border consolidation, analysts say. While some central bankers say such deals are needed for European banks to compete globally, UniCredit SPA's nearly two-year pursuit of Commerzbank AG demonstrates the difficulty.

The euro zone economy's subdued growth and its vulnerability to the fallout from conflict in the Middle East remain concerns for European lenders, despite little sign of rising bad loans or provisioning yet.

Marina Zavolock, chief European equity strategist at Morgan Stanley, said that higher inflation on the back of rising energy prices could benefit European banks, through higher interest rates.

The appeal for investors is also partly the low base from which European banks have recovered. Lombard Odier analysts said in a note this month that although European banks were benefiting less from capital market activity than U.S. rivals, the outlook remained favourable with a stable economic backdrop and rates rising again.

"We think that improving returns on equity are not yet reflected in valuations for European banks," they said.

REUTERS

Shares in Birkin bag maker Hermès dive as sales, Chinese weakness disappoint

DOMINIQUE PATTON PARIS

Hermès International SCA shares sank 11 per cent on Wednesday after the Birkin bag maker posted second-quarter sales growth in line with expectations but said buying in China, its biggest market, had yet to rebound.

Shares in the French luxury group closed at €1,509 ($2,424.96), their worst day in more than 15 years, cutting €19.7-billion off the company's market capitalization.

Hermès said second-quarter sales of products including handbags, silk scarves and perfume rose by 6.7 per cent in currency-adjusted terms to €4.1-billion, in line with expectations and slightly up from 6-per-cent growth in the first quarter.

While an operating profit margin of 41 per cent was better than expected, the relatively modest sales improvement was likely to grab investors' attention, analysts said.

"The problem here is that the shares are trading at 38 times earnings, by far the highest multiple in the sector. And the earnings essentially didn't budge," said Jelena Sokolova, analyst at Morningstar.

Industry bellwether LVMH Moet Hennessy Louis Vuitton SE reported similarly muted results on Monday, although Kering SA positively surprised the market with better-than-expected results at its biggest brand Gucci, a sign chief executive officer Luca de Meo's turnaround push is starting to work.

"We think investors will focus this morning on the top-line growth, and Hermès' slower pace of reacceleration vs peers," analysts at JPMorgan said in a note to clients.

Hermès, which carefully controls production and sales to maintain exclusivity, weathered the COVID-19 crisis better than peers, and had been the most resilient luxury group in a years-long industry-wide slowdown.

Nonetheless, growth fell below high single-digit percentages in the first quarter after conflict in the Middle East dented shoppers' appetite in markets from Dubai to Paris, weighing on shares, which are down 20 per cent so far this year.

The impact of the conflict weakened in the second quarter, the group said on Wednesday, while growth in France increased by 6 per cent from a drop in the first three months of the year.

"In the second quarter, we are seeing improved momentum in our Paris stores," CEO Axel Dumas told reporters, adding that tourist traffic in the country had improved.

Heat-wave conditions and wildfires have, however, deterred some tourists in recent weeks.

Mr. Dumas said question marks remained over both France and the Middle East in the second half and there was no sign of any rebound in China.

In Asia-Pacific excluding Japan, Hermès's biggest region by sales, revenue grew at 2.5 per cent in currency-adjusted terms, steady from the first quarter, but below the 3.3 per cent expected in a consensus of analysts provided by Visible Alpha.

"I see the Chinese market stabilizing, but I do not yet see a fundamental rebound," Mr. Dumas said, adding that despite the uncertain situation, he was happy with the result.

Hermès, which caters to the ultrawealthy with handbags costing more than US$10,000, said the leather goods division that accounts for almost half its revenue grew 10 per cent in the quarter, slightly below a consensus of 10.8 per cent.

Mr. Dumas said the pace of growth should continue at around the same rate in future months.

"I see … going forward the same tendency which at plus 7 per cent is good," Mr. Dumas told analysts.

However investors are looking for more recovery, Ms. Sokolova said. "The rest of the sector is kind of rerating because markets are expecting recovery, and we do have early signs of the recovery happening here and there. But with Hermès, it's just kind of business as usual," she added.

REUTERS

GLOBE INVESTOR

The chip sell-off: Prime AI buying opportunity

Analysts say investors are weighing a range of concerns, including a potential flood of cheaper Chinese chips

ANDREW GALBRAITH

Shares of global chipmakers have taken a sharp fall this week as investors reconsider their bets on winners and losers from the rise of artificial intelligence.

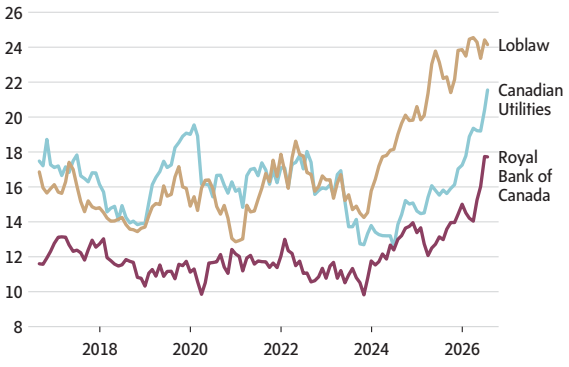
Analysts point to a range of concerns behind the drop, including a potential flood of cheaper Chinese chips, and worries that tech companies investing heavily in AI infrastructure may face higher debt-servicing costs while struggling to generate sustainable revenues.

Seoul-listed shares of chipmaker SK Hynix have slid more than 50 per cent from June highs, and the Philadelphia Semiconductor Index of U.S.-listed chipmakers has shed more than a quarter of its value over the same period. But despite the scale of the declines, some argue it doesn't affect the underlying case for investing in AI-related companies.

"It's a multigenerational opportunity," said Sri Iyer, managing director and head of i3 Investments at Guardian Capital. "The question is about at what price to buy it, not whether to buy it."

The stampede to safety

Artificial-intelligence developers may get all the headlines, but don't overlook the bull market in sensible stocks. Supposedly safe, dependable stocks such as Royal Bank of Canada, Canadian Utilities Ltd. and Loblaw Co. Ltd. are trading at their highest price-to-earnings (P/E) ratios in years. (Share price to forecast earnings for next 12 months)



THE GLOBE AND MAIL , SOURCE: S&P GLOBAL MARKET INTELLIGENCE

But investors hoping to capitalize on AI opportunities have also had to wrestle with the question of what to buy. While proponents of the AI revolution talk up potential efficiency gains boosting profits at non-tech companies that use AI tools, such as through chatbots, supply chain optimization and product innovation, it has been difficult to calculate specific benefits beyond chipmakers and hyperscalers.

"The reality right now is we're still in the very early stages of AI implementation," Mr. Iyer said. A significant amount of money is going to enablers, companies that build the technology and infrastructure behind AI, while adopters, organizations that have integrated AI tools into core business operations, are struggling in the market, he said.

That could change. In a report this week, Morgan Stanley equity analysts led by U.S. equity strategist Michael Wilson said that the adoption of AI tools "is moving decisively from experimentation to measurable enterprise value," with 40 per cent of companies that had adopted AI tools citing at least one quantifiable benefit, nearly double the rate a year earlier.

Gains for companies were concentrated in revenue generation, cost savings, capital efficiency and productivity, the report said, with adoption potentially boosting companies' net margins by one percentage point through 2027.

"The outlook for AI adopters is becoming increasingly compelling, with the benefits of implementation helping to offset concerns around potential disruption," the analysts wrote, adding that industries frequently viewed as vulnerable to AI disruption, such as transport, software and professional services, are among "the more attractive adopter groups" based on their research.

A new exchange-traded fund launched this week reflects the shift. Mr. Iyer said that about two-thirds of the new Toronto-listed Guardian i3 AI Technology and Innovation Fund is focused on AI enablers, but the rest is allocated to companies adopting AI tools.

The ETF itself is the product of several layers of artificial intelligence. Mr. Iyer said Guardian uses AI agents to extract evidence of a company's AI use from its official filings and management transcripts, and to determine the importance of AI to the company's operations.

Guardian then uses AI models to predict factors such as valuation metrics, growth rates, short-term direction and volatility, and to generate recommendations that are then assessed by portfolio managers, who make the final decisions about which companies to include.

In addition to quantifiable elements such as cost savings and revenue generation from AI, Mr. Iyer said AI agents will consider "textual data sets" to analyze newer AI-related public companies that may lack detailed operational and balance-sheet data.

The strategy gives investors an opportunity to gain more nuanced exposure to AI-related companies than following an index or focusing on high-profile tech names, he said.

"This AI universe is not just one big blob. It's got multiple subcomponents."

Investors are nevertheless unlikely to enjoy a smooth ride, even if the outlook for AI companies remains positive. Mr. Iyer noted that both adopters and enablers of AI technology have experienced "excessive volatility" and sharp drawdowns this year. That's despite continued indications of strong profitability in the sector.

"The recent correction has mainly been driven by fear rather than evidence of things starting to go awry," John Higgins, chief economic adviser for financial markets at Capital Economics, wrote in a note. "Analysts' expectations for earnings per share in the big-tech sectors combined have not yet shown signs of faltering."

Mr. Higgins said falling share prices despite steady earnings expectations had the potential to create "room for a sizable recovery if sentiment turns."

Questrade introduces Canada's first AI-connected brokerage accounts

MEERA RAMAN

Online trade platform Questrade Financial Group Inc. is rolling out what it says is Canada's first direct connection between brokerage accounts and popular AI assistants such as Claude and ChatGPT, as part of several products it's releasing as competition among online brokerages intensifies.

The privately owned company unveiled the new offerings on Wednesday at an event in Toronto, betting that a growing generation of self-directed investors is looking for more sophisticated investing tools as brokerages race to add new features.

"We were fintech before there was fintech," chief executive officer Edward Kholodenko said in an interview with The Globe and Mail prior to the event. He said the company is looking to deliver products that meet customers' rapidly evolving needs.

Questrade will let customers use an artificial-intelligence integration called Model Context Protocol to connect their accounts to AI assistants they may already use.

The integration allows clients to ask AI assistants questions about their portfolios, market conditions and watchlists using their own account data. Investors can also draft trades through the AI assistant before approving them through the Questrade app.

Questrade CEO Edward Kholodenko, left, and president Rob Galaski, seen at the company's office in Toronto last week, have plans to eventually integrate AI into savings and borrowing products as well.
LAURA PROCTOR/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

In May, OpenAI released a tool to allow ChatGPT Pro users in the United States to connect with financial accounts and ask the chatbot questions about their money.

Artificial intelligence will play a growing role across Questrade's business beyond investing, the company said, with plans to eventually integrate AI into savings and borrowing products as well.

Questrade is also introducing pre-IPO investing, allowing accredited investors to buy stakes in private companies before they go public. Not to be confused with IPO access, which allows investors to request shares in select Canadian and U.S. initial public offerings at the launch price before public trading begins, pre-IPO investing allows investors to buy in weeks or sometimes months before a company goes public. Questrade is the first self-directed brokerage in Canada to offer this product, it said.

The company also announced commission-free U.S. equity options trading, and for premium members, an added bonus of receiving five cents for every U.S. equity options contract traded.

Questrade now manages about $100-billion in assets, up from $9-billion in 2019.

The company is making the product push as Canada's online brokerage market has become increasingly competitive. Rivals including Wealthsimple, Coinbase Canada, and a new entrant, U.S. brokerage Robinhood, have all expanded their investing offerings over the past year, while millions of Canadians have opened self-directed investing accounts amid growing interest in the markets.

Still, competitors are not driving the company's strategy, Questrade president Rob Galaski said in an interview. "We're not looking to do what everybody else does," he said.

While acknowledging the industry has accelerated the pace of innovation, he said Questrade's focus is on building products that better meet customers' long-term needs rather than simply matching rivals' offerings. "We'll launch similar types of things, but we'll do it in a more thoughtful and better way than everybody else does," Mr. Galaski said.

Alongside the new products, Questrade revealed its first major brand redesign in more than 25 years. The company is ditching its green triangle logo and opting for a lighter green design with just the Questrade name.

"We've been using the same brand, and life has changed around us," Mr. Kholodenko said. "The new brand reflects the direction of where we're going and the type of customer that we're looking to attract." He described that customer as someone ambitious who wants to become more financially secure and successful.

Questrade also continues to pursue a foray into prediction markets, another area where it has been waiting for regulatory approval from the Canadian Investment Regulatory Organization. Wealthsimple is rolling out its prediction market app this summer, partnering with U.S.-based Kalshi.

Buying and selling assets? Understand how to protect capital-gains tax treatment

TIM CESTNICK

OPINION

TAX MATTERS

FCPA, FCA, CPA(IL), CFP, TEP, author, and co-founder and CEO of Our Family Office Inc.

When my kids were little, I taught them about taxes. If they had an ice cream, I'd grab it from them and take a bite. I'd tell them it was a tax. Five minutes later, I'd ask if they still had any ice cream. "No Dad, it's all gone," they'd say. But then I'd tell them to show me what was in their hands. Reluctantly they'd pull out the ice cream again. I'd take another bite. "That's called a tax audit," I'd say. "I just wanted a little more."

When it comes to tax audits, some taxpayers face greater risk than others. Let me explain why.

THE RISK

Suppose you buy an investment – real estate, securities or anything else – hold it for a while, then later sell it for a profit. You report a capital gain, expecting just one half of gain to be included in income. Then the Canada Revenue Agency comes knocking with a different view: You were not simply acquiring and then selling an investment, but you were carrying on a business or undertaking an "adventure in the nature of trade," so the entire profit is recharacterized as business income – which is fully taxable – and penalties can apply to boot.

It's a real risk for entrepreneurs, real estate investors, active private investors, cryptocurrency traders and high-net-worth taxpayers who enter certain transactions repeatedly. Intention matters here.

Where your intention was to buy and sell something quickly to make a buck, the CRA may say that the asset is more akin to business inventory and profit should be taxed as business income. Tax auditors are increasingly able to examine patterns across years, compare financing arrangements, review e-mails and study what you've actually done rather than listen to what you say your intentions were.

The taxman's playbook is fairly predictable. First, the CRA will group your transactions together to create a pattern. Next, it highlights the facts that look commercial: short holding periods, repeated sales, improvements, marketing efforts, leverage and your sophistication.

It then reconstructs your intention at the time of purchase and turns those conclusions into factual assumptions supporting a reassessment. You'll have to produce credible evidence to knock those assumptions down.

THE CASE

The leading case on this issue is Happy Valley Farms Ltd. v. The Queen, 86 D.T.C. 6421 (F.C.T.D.). The taxpayer bought farmland, subdivided it and sold portions at a profit, reporting capital gains. The court sided with the tax authorities and found that the activity looked more like a commercial operation than passive investing.

The court identified six factors that still guide these disputes: the nature of the property; how long it was owned; how often similar transactions occurred; the work done on the property; the circumstances that caused the sale; and the taxpayer's motive when acquiring it. No factor decides the issue alone.

The lesson is that actions speak louder than explanations. You might insist that an asset was purchased as a long-term investment, but short-term financing, development work and a quick resale may tell another story.

There's also the doctrine of "secondary intention." Even where the primary plan was investment, a gain may be business income if, at the time of purchase, you also had a genuine fallback plan to resell at a profit. Your mere willingness to sell if circumstances change is not necessarily enough to trap you, but documentation matters.

The newer residential property-flipping rules raise the stakes further. A gain on certain residential property sold within 12 months is deemed to be business income – with some exceptions. Holding for more than 12 months doesn't guarantee capital treatment, because the traditional Happy Valley analysis still applies.

THE SOLUTION

Your best defence begins before an audit. Keep records at the time you acquire an asset, explaining why an asset was purchased, how the financing was structured (short-term financing might suggest the intention to own the asset was short-term), what income was expected and why a later sale occurred.

E-mails, investment analyses and professional advice at the time of your purchase will generally carry more weight than a polished explanation prepared years later when the tax audit takes place.

Decisions made when a transaction is structured can matter more than arguments raised after an auditor has already formed a conclusion. Consider the narrative the CRA is building.

Separate genuinely independent transactions (just because you flipped a property once and faced tax on business income doesn't mean every transaction you complete should be treated the same way). Explain market-driven decisions, distinguish ordinary flexibility from a resale plan and identify every factual assumption made by the CRA that is wrong or incomplete.

Here's the bottom line: Tax disputes of this kind are won when your conduct, documents and explanation all point in the same direction. The law supplies the test, but your evidence tells the story.

Dow dives more than 1,100 points

U.S. index posts worst day since April, 2025, while in Canada, the TSX retreats 1.2% from record closing high

Oil prices were up roughly 8 per cent after major air strikes resumed in the Middle East. BRENDAN McDERMID/REUTERS

U.S. stocks extended losses, interest-rate sensitive two-year Treasury yields dropped and the greenback slipped on Wednesday after the Federal Reserve held interest rates steady, while oil prices surged after renewed attacks across the Middle East. Canadian stocks closed near their lowest level of the session, with only the energy sector posting gains.

The Fed's decision was largely expected, but three of the 12 members of the policy-setting Federal Open Market Committee dissented from the move that left the benchmark interest rate in the 3.50- to 3.75-per-cent range in favour of a quarter-percentage-point hike.

Oil prices were up roughly 8 per cent after major air strikes resumed in the Middle East, raising the spectre of further disruptions to already impaired global energy supplies. The rally was compounded by industry data showing a drop in U.S. crude inventories.

"There's been a lot of stop-and-start news out of the Middle East, and I think until we get some sort of resolution that's a bit more durable, we'll continue to see that headline risk crop up," said Bill Merz, head of capital markets research and portfolio construction at U.S. Bank Wealth Management in Minneapolis.

The rebound in oil prices had raised expectations that the U.S. central bank could hike rates this week, even though inflation moderated in June more than economists had expected.

"After the June inflation print showed some progress, this move was to be expected," said JP Powers, chief investment officer at TWA Wealth Partners. "But each meeting we're now building more uncertainty around it than the last."

Fed funds futures traders are now pricing in 60-per-cent odds of a rate hike in September.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 2.2 per cent, to 51,594.86, for its worst day since April, 2025. The S&P 500 dropped 1.5 per cent, to 7,316.39 and the Nasdaq Composite was down 1.7 per cent at 24,442.94. The S&P/TSX Composite Index ended down 415.92 points, or 1.2 per cent, at 35,333.78, after posting a record closing high on Tuesday.

The two-year U.S. Treasury yield, which typically moves in step with interest rate expectations for the Fed, fell 5 basis points to 4.227 per cent after rising to 4.339 per cent.

> Fed funds futures traders are now pricing in 60-per-cent odds of a rate hike in September.

Markets had been pricing in a roughly one-in-three chance of a hike heading into the meeting.

But the yield on the U.S. 30-year bond jumped 7.1 basis points to 5.167 per cent and was on track for its biggest daily gain since May 15, suggesting traders expect a build up of longer-term inflationary pressures.

Mr. Warsh, speaking to reporters in a press conference after the release of the Fed's policy statement, said that more forward guidance on monetary policy decisions may be prudent in moments of financial crisis, such as the 2008-2009 period, but it's worth revisiting such guidance during more benign periods.

"It sounds like Warsh will take his lead from the markets. If real yields fall, he may opt to hike. If real yields stay where they are or rise, he can comfortably sit on his hands," said Brian Jacobsen, chief economic strategist at Annex Wealth Management in Menomonee Falls, Wis.

The U.S. dollar index, which measures the greenback against a basket of currencies including the yen and the euro, fell 0.45 per cent to 100.96. That strength in the greenback helped to send the Canadian dollar up about three-tenths of a U.S. cent.

Global markets have been volatile this month as investors question the sustainability of the AI spending boom amid signs that major U.S. companies are deepening a web of AI-linked investments and continuing to funnel billions into the technology at the expense of free cash flow. Earnings expectations have grown so lofty that even a sixfold jump in SK Hynix's quarterly profit fell short on Wednesday, sending its shares tumbling 9.6 per cent.

Meta Platforms dropped 4 per cent in extended trade after the social-media company said it now expects 2026 capital expenditure to be between US$130-billion and US$145-billion, compared with its prior forecast of US$125-billion to US$145-billion. Also after the bell, Microsoft climbed 0.6 per cent after it topped Wall Street estimates for quarterly cloud revenue growth, a sign its massive spending on AI infrastructure was paying off.

Amazon.com and Apple are due to report earnings later this week.

South Korea's KOSPI, which has become emblematic of the wild swings in AI sentiment, fell nearly 6 per cent a day after sinking more than 10 per cent to a three-month low. In response, South Korea will introduce additional curbs on single-stock leveraged exchange-traded funds, or ETFs, including a cap that could limit an individual's investment in such products to 20 per cent of their total investment assets, the finance ministry said on Wednesday.

In TSX trading, heavily weighted financials fell 2.9 per cent. Industrials ended 1-percent lower, with shares of construction and engineering company Aecon Group down 9.1 per cent.

Allied Gold said its planned $5.5-billion sale to China's Zijin Gold was terminated after the companies concluded they were unlikely to satisfy closing conditions by the agreed deadline. Shares of Allied Gold tumbled 18.6 per cent.

Energy added 3.2 per cent, helped by a 4.5-per-cent gain for Cenovus Energy. The company raised its 2026 production outlook after reporting a more than threefold jump in second-quarter profit.

REUTERS, GLOBE STAFF

ETF and mutual fund newcomers that earned their stars

IAN TAM

NUMBER CRUNCHER

CFA, and director of investment research for Morningstar Canada

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

Canadian mutual funds and ETFs that recently became eligible for a Morningstar Star Rating – and earned four or five stars on their first report card.

THE SCREEN

If you've ever researched a mutual fund or ETF, you've probably come across Morningstar's familiar one- to five-star rating. The rating has been around for decades and has become a popular short-cut for investors looking to compare funds. Yet many investors don't realize that a fund must have at least three years of performance history before it can receive a star rating. Until then, even promising new funds remain unrated and can be easy to overlook.

The star rating compares a fund's performance with others in the same category after accounting for fees and risk. A Canadian bond fund, for example, is measured against other Canadian bond funds – not against global stock funds or technology-focused strategies. The rating also puts greater emphasis on more recent results and considers how much risk a fund took to achieve those returns. In simple terms, funds that have delivered better results with less downside risk tend to earn higher ratings.

Of course, a strong star rating doesn't guarantee future success. Markets and investment teams change, and even highly rated funds can go through difficult periods. That said, Morningstar's research has shown that, on average, funds with higher ratings have tended to outperform those with lower ratings over time. While investors should never rely on a single measure when selecting investments, the star rating is a very useful starting point.

This week, I used Morningstar Direct to identify funds and ETFs launched in mid-2023 that have crossed the three-year threshold and qualified for a star rating for the first time. Think of them as the graduating class. Out of roughly 72 funds and ETFs (counting only the oldest share class of each fund), I selected those that earned four or five stars right out of the gate – evidence that they have outperformed many of their peers during their first three years in the market.

WHAT WE FOUND

The table accompanying this article lists the funds and ETFs that met the screen. It includes each fund's category, star rating, management expense ratio, inception date, trailing performance, asset allocation and estimated net asset flows over the past 12 months.

I've also included Morningstar's Medalist Rating, which is our forward-looking assessment of a fund's ability to outperform its peers in the future. Unlike the star rating, which is based on past performance, the Medalist Rating evaluates the strength of the investment team, the quality of the firm and the investment process itself. While I didn't screen specifically for Medalist Ratings, it's notable that many of the qualifying funds have earned gold, silver or bronze ratings, suggesting they may continue delivering strong results.

As always, investors should pay close attention to a fund's category when comparing ratings. A five-star bond fund and a five-star equity fund may both rank highly against their peers, but they can serve very different roles in a portfolio.

This article does not constitute financial advice. Readers are encouraged to conduct their own research before buying or selling any of the funds or ETFs listed here.

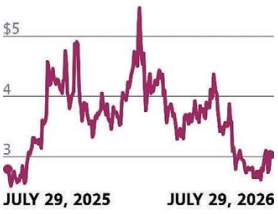
Newcomers that have earned high star ratings

FUND LEGAL NAME	TICKER	MORNINGSTAR CATEGORY	MER (%)	MORNINGSTAR RATING FOR FUNDS	MORNINGSTAR MEDALIST RATING	TOTAL RET YTD (%)	TOTAL RET 1 YR (%)	TOTAL RET ANNLZD 3 YR (%)	INCEPTION DATE	CAN. EQUITY (%)	U.S. EQUITY (%)	INT'L EQUITY (%)	FIXED INCOME (%)	CASH (%)	TOTAL NET ASSET (CAD)	12M EST. NET ASSET FLOWS (CAD)
Stock Fund/ETFs																
Manulife Smart Global Dividend ETF Portfolio	GDIV-N	Global Dividend & Income Equity	0.38	4 Stars	Silver	20.9	29.9	19.1	2023-05-16	5.9	65.1	26.2	1.5	1.2	$75.2M	$52.6M
BMO Sustainable Equity Growth Portfolio		Global Equity	0.87	4 Stars	Neutral	10.2	18.7	17.9	2023-06-16	22.5	40.7	33.4	0.0	2.0	$9.6M	$4.7M
Fidelity Global Innovators ETF	FINN-N	Global Equity	1.09	5 Stars	Gold	33.6	46.3	40.3	2023-05-19	15.3	61.8	22.2	0.0	0.6	$2,856.0M	$1,028.3M
CI Equity Asset Allocation ETF	CEQT-T	Global Equity	0.33	4 Stars	Gold	13.1	25.7	20.5	2023-05-17	28.0	39.3	32.1	0.0	0.5	$50.2M	$31.6M
BMO Global Health Care Fund		Healthcare Equity	0.85	5 Stars	Bronze	8.6	30.2	12.4	2023-06-16	0.0	81.9	16.1	0.0	2.0	$39.7M	-$166.9M
Bond Funds/ETFs																
NBI Canadian Core Plus Bond Fund		Canadian Fixed Income	0.46	5 Stars	Silver	1.1	3.9	5.0	2023-05-12	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.5	-1.4	$851.0M	$267.9M
RBC U.S. Discount Bond ETF	RUDB-T	Global Fixed Income	0.28	5 Stars	Bronze	3.1	5.5	6.5	2023-05-18	0.0	0.0	0.0	99.2	0.8	$435.7M	-$24.4M
Balanced Funds/ETFs																
BMO Managed Conservative Portfolio		Global Fixed Income Balanced	0.79	4 Stars	Bronze	5.7	10.7	9.4	2023-06-16	8.0	19.4	14.7	53.4	3.3	$36.8M	$12.1M
CI Balanced Income Asset Allocation ETF	CBIN	Global Fixed Income Balanced	0.29	4 Stars	Gold	5.8	11.7	10.2	2023-05-17	11.2	15.8	12.9	59.7	0.4	$24.9M	$3.5M
CI Balanced Asset Allocation ETF	CBAL-T	Global Neutral Balanced	0.29	4 Stars	Gold	8.1	15.9	13.2	2023-05-17	16.5	23.2	19.0	40.7	0.5	$165.0M	$99.3M
CI Growth Asset Allocation ETF	CGRO-T	Global Equity Balanced	0.29	4 Stars	Gold	10.6	20.9	17.0	2023-05-17	22.4	31.5	25.7	19.9	0.5	$91.6M	$33.4M
CI Balanced Growth Asset Allocation ETF	CBGR-T	Global Equity Balanced	0.29	4 Stars	Bronze	9.4	18.6	15.2	2023-05-17	19.6	27.6	22.5	29.8	0.5	$43.9M	$28.6M

Source: Morningstar Direct | Data as of July 28, 2026 | Oldest share class only.

EYE ON EQUITIES DAVID LEEDER

PAST YEAR



SOURCE: BARCHART

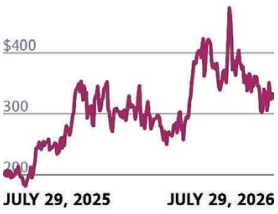
URANIUM ROYALTY (UROY-NASDAQ)

CLOSE US$3.03, UP 25¢

National Bank Financial analyst Mohamed Sidibé upgraded **Uranium Royalty Corp.** to an "outperform" rating from "sector perform" following the close of its acquisition of the 92-per-cent interest in the Sweetwater Entities held by Orion Resource Partners and Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan, citing "the addition of a cash-generating soda ash royalty portfolio with embedded growth and land optionality."

Target: His US$3.75 target falls under the consensus of US$4.50.

PAST YEAR



SOURCE: BARCHART

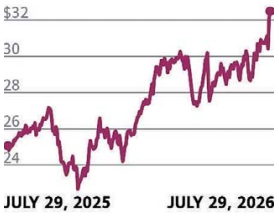
CELESTICA (CLS-NYSE)

CLOSE US$328.43, DOWN $21.77

After "another clean beat-and-raise" from **Celestica Inc.**, CIBC World Markets analyst Todd Coupland thinks the Street's forecast are "too low and the numbers need to move up." "Q2/26 was ahead across the board, and 2026/2027 targets moved well above FactSet consensus," he said. "The key message: 2027 is not a fade year."

Target: Reaffirming his "outperformer" rating, Mr. Coupland raised his target to US$500 from US$480. Consensus is US$445.

PAST YEAR



SOURCE: BARCHART

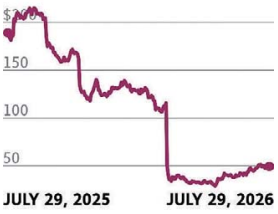
GIBSON ENERGY (GEI-TSX)

CLOSE $32.48, UP 37¢

RBC Dominion Securities analyst Maurice Choy expects a "strong" second-quarter performance from **Gibson Energy Inc.'s** marketing segment to "reignite the market's attention on the potential benefits (and surprises) this business can bring in terms of generating capital-light cash flows to de-lever and/or fund long-term projects."

Target: Keeping an "outperform" rating, Mr. Choy increased his target to $33 from $30. Consensus is $31.50.

PAST YEAR



SOURCE: BARCHART

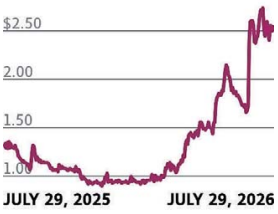
GOEASY (GSY-TSX)

CLOSE $49.00, DOWN $1.99

Previewing its second-quarter earnings release on Aug. 7 in a report titled A Long Road Back, ATB Cormark analyst Jeff Fenwick downgraded **Goeasy Ltd.** to "underperform" from "market perform" previously, warning the results will "feature a continued contraction of the loan book along with elevated credit losses."

Target: His target for Goeasy shares remains $35, which is below the consensus of $37.

PAST YEAR



SOURCE: BARCHART

QUARTERHILL (QTRH-TSX)

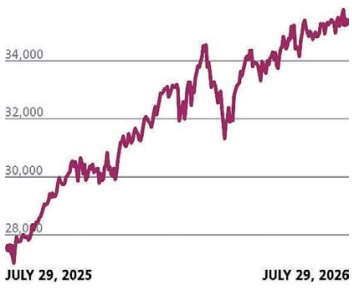
CLOSE $2.52, UP 12¢

Citing the future impact of its recent US$70-million acquisition of the tolling solutions business of Conduent Business Services LLC, ATB Cormark analyst Gavin Fairweather raised **Quarterhill Inc.** to a "top pick" recommendation from "outperform" previously. "We are increasingly confident the post-Conduent Quarterhill is a much larger and more profitable business than the stock is discounting," he said.

Target: His target moved to $5 from $4.40. Consensus is $2.25.

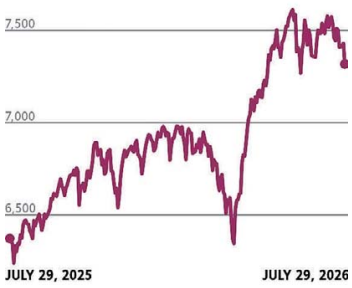
S&P/TSX COMPOSITE INDEX
PAST 12 MONTHS

35333.78 | -415.92 | -1.16 % | 11.42 % YTD | 285380 VOL(000)



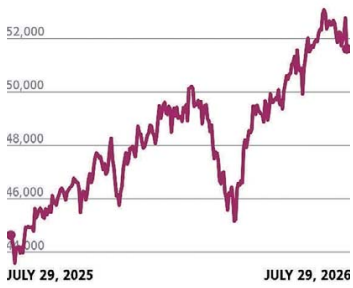
S&P 500
PAST 12 MONTHS

7316.15 | -112.63 | -1.52 % | 6.88 % YTD | 3652905



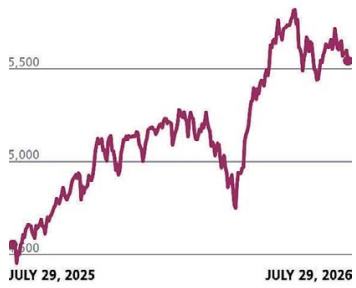
DOW JONES INDUSTRIAL AVERAGE
PAST 12 MONTHS

51594.14 | -1153.18 | -2.19 % | 7.35 % YTD | 538617 VOL(000)



S&P GLOBAL 100 INDEX
PAST 12 MONTHS

5541.69 | -55.67 | -0.99 % | 7.69 % YTD



TSX INDEXES AND SUB INDEXES

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
TSX COMPOSITE IND	35333.78	-415.92	-1.16	285380	11.42
TSX 60 INDEX	2091.63	-25.04	-1.18	136603	12.45
TSX COMPLETION IN	2231.42	-24.41	-1.08	148777	7.30
TSX SMALLCAP INDE	1350.21	-16.26	-1.19	101106	12.84
TSX VENTURE COMPO	858.56	-8.50	-0.98	43791	-13.08
TSX CONSUMER DISC	407.70	-1.78	-0.43	4714	6.56
TSX CONSUMER STAP	1345.58	-3.17	-0.24	4678	8.67
TSX ENERGY CAPPED	426.73	13.08	3.16	47633	42.04
TSX FINANCIALS CA	756.44	-22.79	-2.92	42461	20.55
TSX HEALTH CARE C	23.14	-0.35	-1.49	1857	5.66
TSX INDUSTRIALS C	527.15	-5.28	-0.99	19004	12.88
TSX INFORMATION T	316.04	-1.31	-0.41	11135	-3.23
TSX MATERIALS CAP	708.11	-5.20	-0.73	84054	-5.55
TSX REAL ESTATE C	325.90	-2.45	-0.75	10237	3.01
TSX GLOBAL GOLD I	733.31	-5.82	-0.79	122816	-10.38
TSX GLOBAL MINING	212.30	-2.37	-1.10	354802	1.07
TSX INCOME TRUST	255.99	0.16	0.06	10809	16.24
TSX PREFERRED SHA	719.17	1.92	0.27	418	3.29
TSX COMMUNICATION	154.94	1.90	1.24	20457	-1.22
TSX UTILITIES CAP	413.46	-3.19	-0.77	16060	17.36

TSX VOLUME
TOP 20 FOR STOCKS $1 OR MORE

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
T TELUS CORPORATI	15.65	0.59	3.92	11546	-13.49
CNQ CDN NATURAL R	65.31	2.88	4.61	9354	40.48
AAUC ALLIED GOLD	24.00	-5.50	-18.64	8140	-23.69
KEEL KEEL INFRAST	4.45	-0.82	-15.56	7631	48.33
MFC MANULIFE FIN	61.75	-1.20	-1.91	7490	23.90
ENB ENBRIDGE INC	77.56	-0.47	-0.60	6776	18.09
ABX BARRICK MININ	51.11	-0.74	-1.43	6331	-14.52
RY ROYAL BANK OF	290.34	-9.06	-3.03	5995	24.08
EQX EQUINOX GOLD	12.57	-0.32	-2.48	5718	-34.84
K KINROSS GOLD CO	32.71	-0.50	-1.51	5539	-15.39
BCE BCE INC.	31.42	0.63	2.05	5270	-4.03
SU SUNCOR ENERGY	92.56	2.32	2.57	5079	51.94
CVE CENOVUS ENERG	40.83	1.77	4.53	5059	75.84
OM OSISKO METALS	1.46	-0.14	-8.75	5009	92.11
BMO BANK OF MONTR	246.81	-8.07	-3.17	4988	38.46
TD TORONTO-DOMINI	164.52	-5.45	-3.21	4859	27.18
XIU ISHARES SP TS	52.91	-0.66	-1.23	4688	12.60
IVN IVANHOE MINES	10.59	-0.09	-0.84	4666	-32.16
WCP WHITECAP RESO	16.02	0.42	2.69	4515	39.30
FM FIRST QUANTUM	37.97	0.46	1.23	4102	3.18

TSX 52-WEEK HIGHS
STOCKS $1 OR MORE

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
ABBV ABBVIE CDR (	36.71	-0.17	-0.46	7	13.30
ABNB AIRBNB CDR (	25.51	0.21	0.83	1	11.30
ALZ ALLIANZ CDR (	32.08	-0.03	-0.09	11	9.26
ADW-B ANDREW PELL	11.99	0.02	0.17		83.61
AAPL APPLE CDR (C	47.70	-0.24	-0.50	128	22.78
BRK-PR-E BROOKFIEL	12.50	-0.29	-2.27	13	26.58
BN-PF-C BROOKFIEL	21.90	-0.02	-0.09	2	3.11
BIP-PR-E BROOKFIE	26.40	0.18	0.69	3	1.62
BIP-UN BROOKFIELD	60.20	1.08	1.83	521	26.18
CTC-A CANADIAN TI	206.77	0.40	0.19	202	18.87
COLA COCA-COLA CD	31.07	0.18	0.58	3	25.54
CSW-A CORBY SPIRI	16.80	0.83	5.20	81	13.51
CIU-PR-C CU INC P	21.40	0.60	2.88	1	20.70
DFN DIVIDEND 15 S	9.56	-0.10	-1.04	458	27.98
DGS DIVIDEND GROW	8.87	-0.03	-0.34	166	13.86
DS DIVIDEND SELEC	8.41	0.06	0.72	5	13.50
EMA-PR-L EMERA IN	21.78	0.26	1.21		5.93
ENB-PR-V ENBRIDGE	25.94	0.62	2.45	4	5.83
XTC EXCO TECH	8.25	0.24	3.00	29	20.09
GEI GIBSON ENERGY	32.48	0.37	1.15	1219	29.30

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
HMM-A HAMMOND MA	20.18	2.75	15.78	73	80.02
KEY KEYERA CORP	60.35	1.04	1.75	1962	37.16
MG MAGNA INTERNAT	97.14	-0.21	-0.22	1300	32.76
PPL-PR-E PEMBINA	26.75	0.07	0.26	3	4.37
PWF-PR-P PWR FNL	21.80	0.09	0.41	3	8.03
RS-PR-A REAL ESTA	10.37	-0.03	-0.29	4	1.77
RFA-PR-I RFA FINA	23.50	0.00	0.00	2	3.30
AAPU SAVVYLONG 2X	48.52	-0.82	-1.66	6	42.71
SGR-UN SLATE GROC	17.73	-0.06	-0.34	83	16.26
SGR-U SLATE GROCE	12.61	0.18	1.45		11.79
SYK STRYKER CDR (	23.89	0.45	1.92	4	18.56
TCWW TRADING CENT	21.91	0.82	3.89		9.00
TCUS TRADING CENT	25.00	1.40	5.93		24.38
VISA VISA CDR (CA	33.70	0.26	0.78	47	3.76
WN WESTON GEORGE	105.87	-1.37	-1.28	259	11.81

TSX GAINERS
TOP 20 FOR STOCKS $1 OR MORE

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
CRWN CROWN CAPITA	1.34	0.19	16.52		106.15
HMM-A HAMMOND MA	20.18	2.75	15.78	73	80.02
SOXD MEGASHORT -3	2.47	0.33	15.42	583	-87.99
OILU SAVVYLONG GE	45.78	5.68	14.16	45	183.47
HOU BETAPRO CRUDE	20.17	2.41	13.57	1884	129.99
ALYA ALITHYA GROU	1.14	0.12	11.76	199	-31.74
CNQU SAVVYLONG 2X	43.76	3.95	9.92		78.61
GURU GURU ORGANIC	3.99	0.36	9.92	29	-20.04
NVDD SAVVYSHORT -	13.77	0.91	7.08	5	-21.94
BGAU BLOSSOM GOLD	1.68	0.11	7.01	79	5.00
QQD-U BETAPRO NAS	19.30	1.20	6.63		-19.58
INTU INTUIT CDR (	20.28	1.25	6.57	45	-19.17
NRGU BETAPRO SP T	62.97	3.83	6.48	87	92.92
ABXX ABAXX TECHNO	25.24	1.50	6.32	144	-50.51
VOLX BETAPRO SP50	15.98	0.93	6.18	89	-12.68
SQQQ BETAPRO -3X	9.63	0.55	6.06	875	-26.71
TCUS TRADING CENT	25.00	1.40	5.93		24.38
QQQD MEGASHORT -3	8.99	0.49	5.76	9	-25.46
KEI KOLIBRI GLOBA	7.26	0.39	5.68	16	34.20
ADBE ADOBE CDR (C	10.07	0.53	5.56	401	-25.85

TSX LOSERS
TOP 20 FOR STOCKS $1 OR MORE

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
MUU SAVVYLONG 2X	9.62	-2.29	-19.23	601	-57.24
AAUC ALLIED GOLD	24.00	-5.50	-18.64	8140	-23.69
TELY TELYRX HOLDI	2.30	-0.50	-17.86	50	-34.29
VRT VERTIV CDR (C	16.70	-3.45	-17.12	389	-33.94
SOXU MEGALONG 3X	27.85	-5.48	-16.44	208	110.27
KEEL KEEL INFRAST	4.45	-0.82	-15.56	7631	48.33
OILD SAVVYSHORT G	2.29	-0.41	-15.19	22	-86.30
HBGD-U GLOBAL X B	42.87	-7.64	-15.13		32.48
HOD BETAPRO CRUDE	25.61	-3.95	-13.36	940	-82.31
HUT HUT 8 CORP	123.93	-18.53	-13.01	711	96.34
PLTU SAVVYLONG 2X	16.71	-2.45	-12.79		-29.73
HIVE HIVE DIGITAL	3.55	-0.48	-11.91	2982	0.28
AMDU SAVVYLONG 2X	13.97	-1.88	-11.86	17	-35.32
KLAC KLA CDR (CAD	23.00	-2.88	-11.13	49	-3.89
AII ALMONTY INDUS	15.37	-1.85	-10.74	2471	27.34
SOFY HARVEST SOFI	4.49	-0.51	-10.20	231	-55.23
FAR FORACO INTERN	2.20	-0.24	-9.84	111	-8.33
MU MICRON CDR (CA	32.57	-3.48	-9.65	3311	155.29
SMCI SUPERMICRO C	8.32	-0.88	-9.57	418	-13.51
BNKU MEGALONG 3X	89.15	-9.41	-9.55	27	98.11

TSX 52-WEEK LOWS
STOCKS $1 OR MORE

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
AMAP AMAPA MINERA	1.14	-0.01	-0.87	343	3.64
BOIL BEYOND OIL L	2.10	-0.07	-3.23	145	-28.33
PAYU BROMPTON US	23.92	-0.56	-2.29		-4.40
PAYI BROMPTON UTI	23.58	-0.60	-2.48	4	-6.02
BEPC BROOKFIELD R	45.10	-0.83	-1.81	297	-14.34
CADY CADILLAC MIN	7.03	-0.02	-0.28	393	-0.71
CAPQ CAPITAL GROU	24.56	-0.24	-0.97		-0.93
CAPN CAPITAL GROU	24.87	-0.08	-0.32		-0.52
CRWV COREWEAVE CD	11.57	-1.18	-9.25	179	-52.70
DAGL DESJARDINS G	20.07	-0.12	-0.59		-0.15
ECO ECOSYNTHETIX	2.45	-0.10	-3.92	33	-38.75
GEO GEODRILL LIMI	2.43	-0.04	-1.62		-41.30
GIAI GUARDIAN I3	18.61	-0.77	-3.97	31	
HHII HARVEST INTE	10.99	-0.24	-2.14	44	-5.91
HRMS HERMES CDR (	17.12	-1.47	-7.91	1	-29.40
KLAC KLA CDR (CAD	23.00	-2.88	-11.13	49	-3.89
LRCX LAM RESEARCH	22.16	-1.47	-6.22	51	-12.38
PBY LYSANDER-CANS	16.18	0.01	0.06	1	
MRG-UN MORGUARD N	16.19	-0.46	-2.76	70	-6.79
PCA PHOENIX METAL	1.10	-0.08	-6.78	51	-12.00

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
PWRS QUANTA SERVI	21.14	-1.16	-5.20	3	-26.70
REAL REAL MATTERS	4.93	-0.06	-1.20	17	-15.00
SNDK SANDISK CDR	24.75	-2.00	-7.48	1209	-23.52
AMDU SAVVYLONG 2X	13.97	-1.88	-11.86	17	-35.32
MUU SAVVYLONG 2X	9.62	-2.29	-19.23	601	-57.24
TSLU SAVVYLONG 2X	10.42	-0.69	-6.21	22	-62.98
TELY TELYRX HOLDI	2.30	-0.50	-17.86	50	-34.29
TSLA TESLA CDR (C	25.95	-0.75	-2.81	612	-34.59
TLRY TILRAY BRAND	5.54	-0.14	-2.46	1088	-55.36
VRT VERTIV CDR (C	16.70	-3.45	-17.12	389	-33.94

S&P/TSX COMPOSITE INDEX STOCKS
LARGEST STOCKS BY MARKET CAPITALIZATION

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
BNS BANK OF NOVA	121.14	-3.56	-2.85	2547	19.67
ABX BARRICK MININ	51.11	-0.74	-1.43	6331	-14.52
BHC BAUSCH HEALTH	6.56	0.16	2.50	713	-31.16
BTE BAYTEX ENERGY	5.87	0.21	3.71	3705	32.21
BIR BIRCHCLIFF EN	6.33	0.13	2.10	1125	-15.26
BDT BIRD CONSTRUC	63.86	-3.57	-5.29	407	123.91
BB BLACKBERRY LIM	11.02	-0.42	-3.67	3413	112.74
BEI-UN BOARDWALK	67.10	1.30	1.98	237	4.06
BBD-B BOMBARDIER	358.31	-11.15	-3.02	447	53.45
BLX BORALEX INC.	37.12	0.09	0.24	526	46.55
BYD BOYD GROUP SE	154.53	-4.94	-3.10	105	-29.32
BAM BROOKFIELD AS	66.53	-1.30	-1.92	1233	-7.47
BBUC BROOKFIELD B	44.87	0.10	0.22	61	-8.52
BN BROOKFIELD COR	58.60	-1.24	-2.07	3184	-7.01
BIP-UN BROOKFIELD	60.20	1.08	1.83	521	26.18
BEP-UN BROOKFIELD	44.43	-0.60	-1.33	312	19.79
DOO BRP INC	86.03	-2.14	-2.43	397	-11.35
CAR-UN CDN APARTM	35.39	0.46	1.32	441	-4.01
CNQ CDN NATURAL R	65.31	2.88	4.61	9354	40.48
GIB-A CGI INC	105.01	4.30	4.27	912	-17.17
CRT-UN CT REAL ES	18.75	-0.06	-0.32	132	15.24
CAE CAE INC	36.89	-0.31	-0.83	648	-11.62
CCO CAMECO CORP	118.83	-3.84	-3.13	1039	-5.45
CM CANADIAN IMPER	163.59	-5.45	-3.22	2273	31.47
CNR CANADIAN NATI	182.57	-0.34	-0.19	1713	34.49
CP CANADIAN PACIF	128.36	-1.07	-0.83	1190	27.03
CTC-A CANADIAN TI	206.77	0.40	0.19	202	18.87
CU CANADIAN UTILI	54.94	0.21	0.38	584	28.57
CPX CAPITAL POWER	66.00	-2.17	-3.18	1478	12.72
CS CAPSTONE COPPE	12.80	-0.31	-2.36	3803	-7.11
CJT CARGOJET INC.	85.58	-0.53	-0.62	40	1.95
CCL-B CCL INDUSTR	93.97	-0.66	-0.70	375	8.39
CLS CELESTICA INC	461.40	-30.74	-6.25	498	13.64

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
CVE CENOVUS ENERG	40.83	1.77	4.53	5059	75.84
CG CENTERRA GOLD	23.95	1.25	5.51	1005	21.20
CEU CES ENERGY SO	16.25	-0.85	-4.97	731	32.44
CSH-UN CHARTWELL	23.02	-0.18	-0.78	213	14.53
CHP-UN CHOICE PRO	15.94	-0.18	-1.12	3078	7.63
CCA COGECO COMMUN	61.76	0.35	0.57	208	-7.09
CIGI COLLIERS INT	142.07	-4.64	-3.16	136	-29.58
CSU CONSTELLATION	3116.72	96.42	3.19	105	-5.59
CRR-UN CROMBIE RE	17.62	-0.10	-0.56	94	15.39
CURA CURALEAF HOL	11.76	-0.36	-2.97	210	14.96
DFY DEFINITY FINA	79.21	-1.59	-1.97	291	4.32
DML DENISON MINES	3.79	-0.11	-2.82	3589	4.12
DSG DESCARTES SYS	109.65	3.03	2.84	439	-8.94
DSV DISCOVERY MIN	8.57	-0.06	-0.70	2781	2.27
DOL DOLLARAMA INC	189.42	-1.20	-0.63	749	-7.66
DPM DPM METALS IN	49.30	-0.70	-1.40	1213	16.22
DIR-UN DREAM INDU	14.61	-0.14	-0.95	478	16.14
EQB EQB INC	140.47	-3.00	-2.09	90	35.21
ELD ELDORADO GOLD	44.91	-0.52	-1.14	464	-8.96
EFN ELEMENT FLEET	31.99	-0.21	-0.65	785	-11.26
EMA EMERA INCORPO	76.02	-0.79	-1.03	2052	12.39
EMP-A EMPIRE COMP	52.50	1.00	1.94	391	10.02
ENB ENBRIDGE INC	77.56	-0.47	-0.60	6776	18.09
EDR ENDEAVOUR SIL	10.63	-0.31	-2.83	994	-17.66
EFX ENERFLEX LTD	29.74	-0.91	-2.97	1130	40.55
EFR ENERGY FUELS	15.07	-0.90	-5.64	989	-24.20
EQX EQUINOX GOLD	12.57	-0.32	-2.48	5718	-34.84
ERO ERO COPPER CO	35.48	-0.69	-1.91	278	-8.63
EIF EXCHANGE INCO	124.57	-2.98	-2.34	219	51.99
EXE EXTENDICARE I	36.70	-1.70	-4.43	557	71.90
FFH FAIRFAX FINAN	2410.93	-37.80	-1.54	87	-7.84
FTT FINNING INTL	90.98	-5.63	-5.83	835	22.33
FCR-UN FIRST CAPI	22.86	-0.15	-0.65	483	20.95
AG FIRST MAJESTIC	21.41	-0.72	-3.25	2834	-6.51
FM FIRST QUANTUM	37.97	0.46	1.23	4102	3.18
FSV FIRSTSERVICE	199.97	-1.62	-0.80	190	-6.32
FTS FORTIS INC	81.02	-1.37	-1.66	2088	13.54
FVI FORTUNA MININ	11.75	-0.12	-1.01	577	-12.64
FNV FRANCO-NEVADA	301.44	4.00	1.34	475	5.95
FRU FREEHOLD ROYA	16.82	0.36	2.19	747	10.73
GMIN G MINING VEN	40.92	-1.18	-2.80	1298	-1.37
GFL GFL ENVIRONME	56.63	1.37	2.48	879	-3.95
GEI GIBSON ENERGY	32.48	0.37	1.15	1219	29.30
GIL GILDAN ACTIVE	71.83	-1.17	-1.60	769	-16.27
GRT-UN GRANITE RE	97.94	-0.61	-0.62	65	19.86
GWO GREAT-WEST LI	90.43	-1.47	-1.60	1810	33.59
HPS-A HAMMOND POW	234.04	-7.37	-3.05	133	46.75
HWX HEADWATER EXP	13.40	0.45	3.47	694	43.01
HR-UN HR REAL EST	11.15	-0.04	-0.36	398	8.99
HBM HUDBAY MINERA	30.90	0.14	0.46	2690	13.39
H HYDRO ONE LIMIT	58.71	-0.83	-1.39	1248	7.45
IAU I 80 GOLD COR	1.79	-0.04	-2.19	678	-11.39
IAG IA FINANCIAL	203.56	-4.33	-2.08	381	14.47
IMG IAMGOLD CORP	19.58	-0.55	-2.73	1410	-13.55
IGM IGM FINANCIAL	81.93	-2.79	-3.29	266	32.55
IMO IMPERIAL OIL	180.96	3.38	1.90	886	52.61
IFC INTACT FINANC	284.80	-20.20	-6.62	862	-0.33
IPCO INTERNATIONA	30.58	0.93	3.14	418	23.16

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
IIP-UN INTERRENT	13.54	0.01	0.07	647	2.65
IVN IVANHOE MINES	10.59	-0.09	-0.84	4666	-32.16
JWEL JAMIESON WEL	42.04	-0.70	-1.64	71	24.93
KNT K92 MINING IN	22.64	0.08	0.35	948	-0.22
KEL KELT EXPLORAT	9.69	0.27	2.87	525	26.34
KEY KEYERA CORP	60.35	1.04	1.75	1962	37.16
KMP-UN KILLAM APA	18.92	0.11	0.58	200	15.37
KXS KINAXIS INC	170.67	3.93	2.36	157	-1.39
K KINROSS GOLD CO	32.71	-0.50	-1.51	5539	-15.39
LIF LABRADOR IRON	26.64	0.72	2.78	211	-10.81
LB LAURENTIAN BAN	40.25	-0.04	-0.10	187	-0.12
LSPD LIGHTSPEED C	15.47	0.38	2.52	1400	-6.58
LNR LINAMAR CORP	104.18	-0.85	-0.81	119	25.58
LAC LITHIUM AMERI	3.82	-0.08	-2.05	764	-36.01
L LOBLAW CO	66.03	-0.10	-0.15	1011	6.41
LUG LUNDIN GOLD I	82.54	1.44	1.78	508	-27.61
LUN LUNDIN MINING	34.54	-0.18	-0.52	1664	17.08
MG MAGNA INTERNAT	97.14	-0.21	-0.22	1300	32.76
MFC MANULIFE FIN	61.75	-1.20	-1.91	7490	23.90
MFI MAPLE LEAF FO	29.32	0.13	0.45	192	17.61
MDA MDA SPACE LTD	40.43	-1.83	-4.33	993	51.76
MX METHANEX CORP	76.77	1.56	2.07	552	41.02
MRU METRO INC	95.36	0.54	0.57	323	-3.47
MAU MONTAGE GOLD	16.07	-0.42	-2.55	623	62.65
MTL MULLEN GROUP	27.85	-0.47	-1.66	374	76.94
NA NATIONAL BANK	223.08	-7.91	-3.42	1566	29.24
NXE NEXGEN ENERGY	12.53	-0.41	-3.17	2952	-0.79
NFI NFI GROUP INC	25.32	-0.70	-2.69	249	63.14
NGEX NGEX MINERAL	25.22	-0.31	-1.21	140	-1.48
NPI NORTHLAND POW	21.48	-0.24	-1.10	910	20.34
NG NOVAGOLD RES I	8.12	-0.10	-1.22	578	-36.56
NTR NUTRIEN LTD	99.18	1.18	1.20	1353	17.07
OR OR ROYALTIES I	41.50	-0.01	-0.02	330	-14.64
OGC OCEANAGOLD CO	34.07	0.02	0.06	1070	-12.42
ONEX ONEX CORPORA	107.92	-2.38	-2.16	119	-4.46
OTEX OPEN TEXT CO	36.38	1.41	4.03	1062	-18.61
OLA ORLA MINING L	12.56	-0.34	-2.64	1765	-31.96
PAAS PAN AMERICAN	59.80	-1.23	-2.02	664	-15.96
POU PARAMOUNT RES	29.46	0.70	2.43	188	21.79
PXT PAREX RESOURC	23.29	0.88	3.93	710	26.23
PPL PEMBINA PIPEL	70.86	0.43	0.61	1623	35.51
PPTA PERPETUA RES	24.27	-0.31	-1.26	108	-26.96
PEY PEYTO EXPLORA	25.84	0.69	2.74	626	13.78
POW POWER CORPORA	90.92	-2.64	-2.82	1492	24.63
PSK PRAIRIESKY RO	34.86	0.61	1.78	498	28.97
PBH PREMIUM BRAND	94.28	2.11	2.29	231	-7.31
PMZ-UN PRIMARIS R	23.08	-0.12	-0.52	289	48.04
QBR-B QUEBECOR IN	65.22	-0.59	-0.90	1403	26.15
RBA RB GLOBAL INC	161.89	-2.67	-1.62	220	14.56
QSR RESTAURANT BR	106.23	0.63	0.60	521	13.42
RCH RICHELIEU HAR	35.45	-0.43	-1.20	73	-10.39
REI-UN RIOCAN REA	22.55	-0.15	-0.66	704	20.59
RCI-B ROGERS COMM	48.96	-0.11	-0.22	2027	-5.50
RY ROYAL BANK OF	290.34	-9.06	-3.03	5995	24.08
RUS RUSSEL METALS	67.23	-1.45	-2.11	437	53.49

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
SAP SAPUTO INC.	41.59	0.01	0.02	942	0.68
SEA SEABRIDGE GOL	35.43	0.06	0.17	91	-12.93
SES SECURE WASTE	23.70	0.43	1.85	1128	37.23
SHOP SHOPIFY INC	181.73	-2.19	-1.19	1656	-17.77
SIA SIENNA SENIOR	23.17	-0.14	-0.60	163	13.41
SVM SILVERCORP ME	12.83	-0.44	-3.32	462	11.76
SKE SKEENA RESOUR	36.03	-1.24	-3.33	319	10.52
SRU-UN SMARTCENTR	29.95	-0.12	-0.40	322	16.31
SOBO SOUTH BOW CO	52.54	0.05	0.10	597	39.18
SXGC SOUTHERN CRO	9.21	0.04	0.44	317	-13.03
SDE SPARTAN DELTA	11.33	0.18	1.61	356	56.28
SII SPROTT INC.	146.10	-3.07	-2.06	70	8.67
SSRM SSR MINING I	35.17	-0.70	-1.95	293	16.88
STN STANTEC INC	100.73	-0.68	-0.67	518	-22.23
SJ STELLA JONES I	77.53	-1.78	-2.24	93	-8.93
SCR STRATHCONA RE	41.97	2.14	5.37	891	48.15
SLF SUN LIFE FINA	115.72	-2.97	-2.50	1721	35.06
SU SUNCOR ENERGY	92.56	2.32	2.57	5079	51.94
SPB SUPERIOR PLUS	8.06	0.03	0.37	454	14.49
TRP TC ENERGY COR	94.61	-0.84	-0.88	2695	25.18
X TMX GROUP LIMIT	51.75	-0.32	-0.61	894	-0.92
TVE TAMARACK VALL	13.33	0.43	3.33	1575	67.04
TECK-B TECK RESOU	80.87	-1.90	-2.30	1030	23.07
T TELUS CORPORATI	15.65	0.59	3.92	11546	-13.49
TVK TERRAVEST IND	121.14	1.29	1.08	61	-26.36
TFII TFI INTERNAT	198.27	-10.73	-5.13	367	39.75
NWC THE NORTH WES	51.92	0.

SPORTS

San Jose Sharks sign Celebrini to NHL-record contract extension ■ B12

Kansas City offensive co-ordinator remains with wife after shooting ■ B14

BLUE JAYS VS. NATIONALS

Taking flight

Blue Jays outfielder Daulton Varsho makes a leaping catch at the wall on a hit by Washington's Brady House during the first inning at Nationals Park on Wednesday in Washington. The Blue Jays won, 5-2, to win the series two games to one ■ B13

SCOTT TAETSCH/GETTY IMAGES

FIFA's Infantino sets deadline for members to accept Kushner-backed World Cup investor plan

GRAHAM DUNBAR
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

FIFA president Gianni Infantino set a Sept. 19 deadline on Wednesday for the 211 member federations to accept one-off US$20-million offers as part of a project to sell stakes in the World Cup to private investors.

The US$20-billion FIFA subsidiary, bankrolled by the brother of Jared Kushner, was blasted by international soccer organizations. Europe's soccer body UEFA aims to call its 55 member federations to an emergency online meeting, likely on Thursday. The organization said "there is significant and growing opposition to FIFA's scheme."

The effort is being bankrolled by Joshua Kushner, the brother of Jared Kushner, U.S. President Donald Trump's son-in-law.

The effort also marks Infantino's latest attempt to align with those in the orbit of Trump: by creating the FIFA peace prize, letting Trump intervene in a process that led to United States forward Folarin Balogun playing at the World Cup, and now trying to lock in Joshua Kushner's investment firm to a 12-year ownership deal with the Switzerland-based not-for-profit soccer body.

Infantino set out the "singular and unique funding opportunity" in a letter detailing why he wants to create the US$20-billion FIFA subsidiary – 20 per cent owned by private investors – that would run the soccer body's competitions and events like World Cups and Club World Cups.

"It is my duty and responsibility as FIFA president to present such game-changing opportunities to you, our members," Infantino wrote in the letter seen by The Associated Press.

The effort elevates the status of Joshua Kushner, who has long been connected financially to his brother Jared.

When Joshua Kushner founded a venture capital firm rather than follow into the family's real estate business, his elder brother was an early investor and a board member. The brothers are reportedly close, and their father, Charles Kushner, received a pardon from Trump and now serves as the U.S. Ambassador to France.

But the younger Kushner has a history of six-figure donations to Democrats and his wife, the model and entrepreneur Karlie Kloss, attended last month's opening of the Obama presidential library and told Bloomberg earlier this year she's never met Donald Trump.

The proposal revealed Tuesday and backed by Joshua Kushner's investment firm Thrive Capital was met with immediate fury by Infantino's former colleagues at UEFA, which said the World Cup "is not FIFA's to sell."

One option open to European soccer is to threaten a boycott of FIFA competitions – a tactic used in 2021 when UEFA-led opposition helped stop Infantino's plan to play the World Cup every two years instead of four.

FIFA's private equity plan is the latest ambitious project proposed during Infantino's 11-year presidency in which he has increasingly seemed to be an executive leader acting without consulting with soccer's major stakeholders. Previous plans include creating a FIFA Peace Prize – awarded to Trump in December at the World Cup draw – and trying to push through a secretive US$25-billion private equity plan in 2018 to create new and bigger men's competitions. That was resisted by UEFA.

Concerns about the latest and previously secret plan were aired Wednesday by the continental soccer bodies for Asia and the North American region known as CONCACAF.

"We are deeply concerned by the lack of due process," CONCACAF said in a statement.

The Kuala Lumpur-based Asian Football Confederation said it was "disappointed that a matter of such significance entered the public domain before the AFC family had been afforded the opportunity to examine and discuss it."

Continental bodies that organize their own international club and national-team competitions – such as the Champions League, European Championship and Copa America – likely will see threats to those events from FIFA wanting to increase revenue and value for investors by playing World Cups and Club World Cups for men and women more often, along with adding more teams.

The influential, 850-member European Football Clubs group – which has a joint venture with UEFA to manage the Champions League – said it "learned about this proposal in the same way as most global football stakeholders – without warning and through the media."

Inviting in private investors could also, sports governance academic Antoine Duval suggested Wednesday "incentivize FIFA to further commodify the World Cup [think more hydration breaks and dynamic pricing] in a drive to increase its revenue."

■ FIFA, B13

A new league marks another major moment in a scattered history for women's pro baseball

JAY COHEN CHICAGO

The United States' first women's professional baseball league in nearly 30 years is about to embark on its inaugural season in what marks a major milestone in the scattered history of the sport in the country.

The Women's Pro Baseball League is also part of a timeline that goes back to the very beginning of the sport.

"Women have always been part of this game," said Kat Williams, the chief executive officer of the International Women's Baseball Center. "We've always played, we've always umpired, we've always coached. And in some of the earliest references in the 17th century, the earliest references to something like a game of baseball, it was women that were playing it."

Next up is the WPBL, which plays its first game Saturday. The league has four teams – New York, Boston, Los Angeles and San Francisco – for its first year, but the 15 regular-season games for each club and the playoffs will be held at Robin Roberts Stadium in Springfield, Ill. The ballpark has a seating capacity of 5,200, and Springfield hosted one of the earliest paid women's games when the Blondes faced the Brunettes on Sept. 11, 1875.

Kelsie Whitmore, Mo'ne Davis and Ayami Sato are among the marquee names expected to play in the league's first season. Each team will have 15 active players for the seven-inning games.

"It's amazing. It's one of those kind of things that we always hoped would happen, but wasn't sure that we would see it happen any time soon," said Leslie Heaphy, the president of the IWBC and the chair of the women in baseball committee for the Society for American Baseball Research. "And it's fitting, it's needed, and yeah, it's exciting."

■ WPBL, B13

Kelsie Whitmore pitches during a Women's Pro Baseball League practice on March 18 in Fort Myers, Fla. Whitmore is one of the marquee names expected to play in the league's first season. REBECCA BLACKWELL/AP

Sharks sign Celebrini to record contract, making him NHL's top paid player

Centre has signed a five-year contract extension worth $18.8-million a season

San Jose Sharks centre Macklin Celebrini had 45 goals and 70 assists to finish fourth in NHL scoring last season with 115 points. Celebrini, who was the first overall pick in the 2024 NHL draft, played for Canada at the Winter Olympics. BRUCE BENNETT/GETTY IMAGES

The San Jose Sharks made Macklin Celebrini the NHL's highest-paid player Wednesday, signing the star centre to a five-year contract extension worth US$18.8-million a season.

The 20-year-old from North Vancouver, B.C., surpassed the US$18-million average annual value in Leo Carlsson's five-year contract with the Anaheim Ducks – from a signed offer sheet with the Philadelphia Flyers – earlier this month.

He had one year remaining on his three-year, US$2.925-million entry-level contract before signing the deal that keeps him locked up with the Sharks through the 2031-32 season.

Celebrini finished fourth in NHL scoring last season with 115 points – 45 goals and 70 assists – helping the Sharks post one of the biggest single-season improvements in franchise history.

The 6-foot, 190-pound forward led San Jose in nearly every offensive category, factoring into 46.2 per cent of the team's goals as the upstart Sharks finished four points outside the playoff picture.

Celebrini finished 56 points ahead of the team's next-closest scorer, Will Smith, marking the widest gap between the top two scorers on an NHL team since 1990-91.

"I couldn't be happier to sign an extension today," Celebrini said in a statement. "The faith and support that [owner Hasso] Plattner, Mike Grier and the entire staff have shown me throughout the past two seasons is proof that we are building something special here.

"My teammates and I are ready to take another step toward the ultimate goal of bringing a Stanley Cup to this city and its incredible fans. I can't wait to get going."

Celebrini also became just the second teenager in NHL history, after Wayne Gretzky, to record at least 40 goals and 70 assists in a season. He finished fourth in voting for the Hart Trophy as league MVP.

The first overall pick in the 2024 NHL draft has 178 points (70 goals, 108 assists) in 152 career games over two NHL seasons.

Celebrini also represented Canada at the 2026 Milan Cortina Winter Olympics, finishing as the tournament's top goal-scorer en route to a silver medal. He then captained the nation at the world championship last spring, earning IIHF male player of the year honours.

"In just two seasons as a teenager in the National Hockey League and on the international stage, Macklin has established himself as one of the premier players in the world," Sharks general manager Mike Grier said in a statement. "We are extremely excited to have him secured and committed as the centrepiece of a core of talented players in San Jose."

The Sharks boast a talented group of young players around Celebrini, including Smith, 2025 second overall pick Michael Misa and 2026 second overall pick Ivar Stenberg.

San Jose also added several veterans over the off-season, acquiring defencemen Darnell Nurse and Michael Kesselring in trades while signing defenceman Jacob Trouba and forward Mason Marchment in free agency.

The Sharks haven't made the playoffs since the 2018-19 season.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

MLB

AMERICAN LEAGUE

EAST DIVISION	W	L	Pct	GB
Tampa Bay	62	44	.585	—
New York	61	46	.570	1½
Boston	55	51	.519	7
Baltimore	53	56	.486	10½
Toronto	50	59	.459	13½
CENTRAL DIVISION				
Chicago	55	51	.519	—
Cleveland	55	54	.505	1½
Minnesota	54	54	.500	2
Detroit	51	58	.468	5½
Kansas City	45	63	.417	11
WEST DIVISION				
Texas	55	52	.514	—
Houston	54	55	.495	2
Seattle	53	55	.491	2½
Athletics	45	62	.421	10
Los Angeles	42	66	.389	13½

Wednesday
Baltimore 10, Detroit 9, 12 innings
Texas at Tampa Bay
Kansas City at Minnesota
N.Y. Yankees at Chicago White Sox
Houston at L.A. Angels
Boston at Athletics

Tuesday
Detroit 14, Baltimore 0
Texas 4, Tampa Bay 1
Minnesota 3, Kansas City 2
N.Y. Yankees 3, Chicago White Sox 2
Athletics 4, Boston 3
Houston 3, L.A. Angels 2

Thursday
All Times Eastern
Texas (Eovaldi 10-8) at Tampa Bay (McClanahan 9-6), 12:10 p.m.
Kansas City (Cameron 5-8) at Minnesota (Ober 7-3), 1:40 p.m.
N.Y. Yankees (Weathers 4-7) at Chicago White Sox (Burke 7-5), 2:10 p.m.
Boston (Gray 12-2) at Athletics (TBD), 9:40 p.m.

INTERLEAGUE

Wednesday
Toronto 5, Washington 2
Cleveland at Cincinnati
Seattle at L.A. Dodgers

Tuesday
Washington 8, Toronto 6
Cleveland 6, Cincinnati 5, 1st game
Cincinnati 2, Cleveland 0, 2nd game
Seattle 7, L.A. Dodgers 6

Thursday
All Times Eastern
Seattle (Miller 4-5) at L.A. Dodgers (Sasaki 4-5), 10:10 p.m.

AMERICAN LEAGUE LEADERS

Home Runs
Alvarez, Houston, 35; Rice, New York, 31; Caminero, Tampa Bay, 29; Buxton, Minnesota, 25; C.Montgomery, Chicago, 24; Okamoto, Toronto, 24; Langeliers, Athletics, 23; 5 tied at 22.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

EAST DIVISION	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	62	45	.579	—
Philadelphia	57	52	.523	6
Miami	55	54	.505	8
Washington	55	54	.505	8
New York	46	62	.426	16½
CENTRAL DIVISION				
Milwaukee	67	41	.620	—
Chicago	61	46	.570	5½
Pittsburgh	55	54	.505	12½
St. Louis	53	54	.495	13½
Cincinnati	50	56	.472	16
WEST DIVISION				
Los Angeles	67	40	.626	—
Arizona	57	52	.523	11
San Diego	55	53	.509	12½
San Francisco	46	62	.426	21½
Colorado	42	67	.385	26

Wednesday
Miami 8, Philadelphia 6
Arizona 3, Pittsburgh 0
N.Y. Mets 3, Atlanta 2, 1st game
San Francisco 16, Milwaukee 3
Colorado at San Diego
Atlanta at N.Y. Mets, 2nd game
Chicago Cubs at St. Louis

Tuesday
Miami 1, Philadelphia 0
Arizona 8, Pittsburgh 7, 12 innings
Chicago Cubs 10, St. Louis 2
Milwaukee 8, San Francisco 2
San Diego 8, Colorado 7
Atlanta at N.Y. Mets, ppd.

Thursday
All Times Eastern
Chicago Cubs (Imanaga 7-8) at St. Louis (Pallante 11-6), 2:15 p.m.
Miami (Perez 5-8) at N.Y. Mets (McLean 7-7), 7:10 p.m.
Pittsburgh (TBD) at Cincinnati (Lowder 3-7), 7:10 p.m.
Washington (Irvin 2-4) at Atlanta (Holmes 6-4), 7:15 p.m.
San Francisco (Ray 9-6) at San Diego (TBD), 9:40 p.m.

CFL

EAST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	PF	PA	Pt
Montreal	7	6	1	239	204	12
Hamilton	7	3	4	167	190	6
Toronto	7	3	4	220	219	6
Ottawa	6	0	6	153	213	0

WEST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	PF	PA	Pt
Edmonton	7	6	1	203	172	12
Saskatchewan	6	4	2	204	169	8
Winnipeg	7	4	3	185	208	8
Calgary	7	3	4	278	244	6
British Columbia	6	1	5	152	182	2

WEEK NINE
Bye: Toronto
Thursday — All Times Eastern
British Columbia at Winnipeg, 8:30 p.m.

Friday
Montreal at Ottawa, 7:30 p.m.

WTA TOUR

MUBADALA CITI DC OPEN

Wednesday
At Washington DC, United States
Purse: $2,488,125
Surface: Hardcourt outdoor
MEN'S
SINGLES — ROUND OF 32
Alex de Minaur (1), Australia, def. Stefanos Tsitsipas, Greece, 6-4, 3-6, 6-3.

SINGLES — ROUND OF 16
Lorenzo Musetti (4), Italy, def. Aleksandar Vukic, Australia, 6-3, 5-7, 6-3.
Taylor Fritz (3), United States, def. Kamil Majchrzak, Poland, 6-3, 6-4.

DOUBLES — ROUND OF 16
Ariel Behar, Uruguay, and Anirudh Chandrasekar, India, def. Francisco Cabral, Portugal, and James Tracy, United States, 3-6, 7-6 (2), 10-8.
Fabien Reboul and Sadio Doumbia, France, def. Fernando Romboli, Brazil, and John-Patrick Smith, Australia, 6-3, 6-4.

WOMEN'S
SINGLES — ROUND OF 16
Liudmila Samsonova, Russia, def. Wang Xinyu, China, 6-2, 6-2.
Alexandra Eala, Philippines, def. Leylah Fernandez (7), Canada, 6-2, 7-6 (1).
Elisabetta Cocciaretto, Italy, def. Emma Navarro (8), United States, 6-3, 4-6, 6-3.

DOUBLES — QUARTERFINALS
Aldila Sutjiadi, Indonesia, and Erin Routliffe (2), New Zealand, def. Alana Smith and Clervie Ngounoue, United States, 6-3, 6-2.
Zhang Shuai, China, and Janice Tjen (3), Indonesia, def. Miyu (1994) Kato, Japan, and Giuliana Olmos, Mexico, 4-6, 6-2, 10-0.

SPORTLIGHT

JULY 30

1870 — Monmouth Park opens with a five-day meet.
1930 — Host Uruguay beats Argentina 4-2 for soccer's first World Cup in Montevideo.
1932 — The 10th modern Olympic Games open in Los Angeles.
1961 — Jerry Barber edges Don January by one stroke in a playoff to win the PGA title at Olympia Fields in Illinois.
1966 — England beats West Germany 4-2 at London's Wembley Stadium to capture soccer's World Cup.
1968 — Washington's Ron Hansen pulls off an unassisted triple play in a 10-1 loss to Cleveland.
1971 — In the NFL Chicago All-Star Game, the Baltimore Colts beat the All-Stars 24-17.
1976 — Bruce Jenner sets the world record in the Olympic decathlon with 8,618 points, breaking Nikolai Avilov's mark by 164 points.

MLS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	GP	W	L	T	GF	GA	Pt
Nashville	17	12	2	3	33	12	39
Miami	17	11	2	4	43	30	37
New England	16	9	5	2	26	19	29
Chicago	16	8	6	2	30	22	26
N.Y. City F.C.	17	7	6	4	30	23	25
Charlotte	17	7	6	4	28	25	25
Cincinnati	17	6	6	5	41	42	23
N.Y. Red Bulls	17	6	7	4	26	37	22
D.C.	17	5	5	7	24	27	22
Orlando	17	6	9	2	28	44	20
Columbus	17	5	8	4	24	26	19
Toronto	17	3	7	7	23	31	16
Montreal	17	4	10	3	22	33	15
Philadelphia	17	3	10	4	22	31	13
Atlanta	17	3	11	3	17	30	12

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	GP	W	L	T	GF	GA	Pt
Vancouver	16	10	3	3	37	16	33
San Jose	17	10	4	3	35	20	33
Los Angeles F.C.	18	10	5	3	34	18	33
Salt Lake	16	8	6	2	28	24	26
Houston	16	8	6	2	23	24	26
Dallas	17	7	5	5	32	25	26
St. Louis	17	7	6	4	23	23	25
Seattle	16	7	6	3	19	20	24
Minnesota	17	6	6	5	19	24	23
Portland	17	6	8	3	31	32	21
L.A. Galaxy	18	5	7	6	24	29	21
San Diego	17	5	7	5	31	28	20
Colorado	17	6	10	1	26	25	19
Austin	17	4	8	5	22	35	17
Kansas City	17	4	11	2	18	44	14

MLS ALL-STAR BREAK
At Charlotte, N.C.
Wednesday
MLS All-Stars vs. LIGA MX All-Stars

Tuesday
Skills Challenge

Friday — All Times Eastern
Toronto at New York City F.C., 7:30 p.m.

TELEVISION

THURSDAY (ALL TIMES EASTERN)

BASEBALL
MLB: N.Y. Yankees vs. Chicago White Sox, SN Ontario, East, West, Pacific, 2 p.m.
MLB: Miami vs. N.Y. Mets, SN Ontario, East, West, Pacific, 7 p.m.
MLB: Seattle vs. L.A. Dodgers, SN Ontario, East, West, Pacific, 10 p.m.

FOOTBALL
CFL: BC Lions vs. Winnipeg, TSN 3, 4, 5, 9 p.m.

GOLF
LPGA: AIG Women's Open, Golf Channel, 4 a.m.
PGA: Rocket Classic, Golf Channel, 3 p.m.
PGA Korn Ferry: Utah Championship, Golf Channel, 6 p.m.

TENNIS
ATP: Mubadala DC Open, TSN 2, 11 a.m., 4:30 p.m.

NSL

	GP	W	L	T	GF	GA	Pt
Ottawa	13	10	2	1	30	15	31
Toronto	13	6	4	3	18	13	21
Montreal	13	7	3	3	24	13	24
Halifax	13	5	6	2	15	12	17
Vancouver	13	5	7	1	20	30	16
Calgary	13	0	11	2	9	33	2

Wednesday
Montreal at Vancouver

Tuesday
Toronto 1 Calgary 0

Saturday, Aug. 1
All Times Eastern
Toronto at Calgary, 4 p.m.

CPL

	GP	W	L	T	GF	GA	Pt
Hamilton	13	11	1	1	23	8	34
Calgary	14	9	2	3	25	8	30
Ottawa	14	6	5	3	22	25	21
Vancouver	14	6	6	2	21	15	20
Halifax	15	4	7	4	20	24	16
Quebec	13	4	7	2	19	25	14
Toronto	12	3	5	4	15	25	13
Victoria	13	0	10	3	15	30	3

Note: Three points awarded for a win, one for a tie.
Wednesday-Thursday
No Games Scheduled.

Tuesday
Calgary 2 Quebec 1

Friday
All Times Eastern
Quebec at Victoria, 10 p.m.

CANADIAN CLUB SOCCER CHAMPIONSHIP

QUARTERFINALS

SECOND LEG
Tuesday, Aug. 11
All Times Eastern
Atletico Ottawa (CPL) at Supra du Quebec (CPL), 7 p.m.
(Supra du Quebec leads on 3-2 aggregate)

2026 COMMONWEALTH GAMES

MEDAL STANDINGS

At Glasgow, Scotland
Through Wednesday's events

Nation	G	S	B	Tot
Australia	47	21	35	103
England	12	27	17	56
Canada	**14**	**11**	**14**	**39**
Scotland	9	7	7	23
South Africa	6	8	8	22
India	3	9	3	15
Wales	2	5	8	15
Nigeria	7	5	2	14
New Zealand	3	7	4	14
Malaysia	6	2	3	11
Northern Ireland	1	2	4	7
Kenya	2	2	2	6

WNBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Indiana	18	10	.643	—
Atlanta	16	10	.615	1
New York	16	12	.571	2
Washington	15	12	.556	2½
Toronto	10	17	.370	7½
Chicago	9	18	.333	8½
Connecticut	7	21	.250	11

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Minnesota	23	6	.793	—
Las Vegas	19	8	.704	3
Golden State	19	8	.704	3
Dallas	18	9	.667	4
Portland	11	17	.393	11½
Los Angeles	10	17	.370	12
Phoenix	10	18	.357	12½
Seattle	6	24	.200	17½

Wednesday
Atlanta at Dallas
Golden State at Phoenix

Tuesday
Washington 92, Connecticut 84
Minnesota 100, Toronto 93
Indiana 105, Seattle 95
Las Vegas 98, Portland 83
New York 113, Los Angeles 109

Thursday
All Times Eastern
Connecticut at Chicago, 8 p.m.
Minnesota at Toronto, 8 p.m.
New York at Las Vegas, 10 p.m.

WNBA SCORING LEADERS
Through Games of Tuesday, July 28

	GP	FG	FT	Pts	Avg
A. Wilson, LV	25	231	166	654	26.2
K. Mitchell, Ind	28	228	123	657	23.5
C. Clark, Ind	24	160	131	515	21.5
B. Stewart, NY	27	193	167	577	21.4

CEBL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	GP	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Scarborough	22	18	4	.818	—
Brampton	21	10	11	.476	7½
Niagara	22	10	12	.455	8
Montreal	23	10	13	.434	8½
Ottawa	22	9	13	.409	9

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	GP	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Vancouver	23	14	9	.609	—
x-Winnipeg	22	13	9	.591	½
x-Saskatoon	21	10	11	.476	3
x-Edmonton	22	9	13	.409	4½
Calgary	22	7	15	.318	6½

Wednesday
Niagara at Saskatoon

Tuesday
Montreal 87 Vancouver 82

Thursday
All Times Eastern
Montreal at Brampton, 7:30 p.m.

RESULTS AS OF WEDNESDAY, JULY 29, 9:30 P.M.

CORNERED

"Permission to treat the witness as a hostile, pompous, self-important, arrogant jackass."

OFF THE MARK

SPEED BUMP

BIZARRO

[WORLD LACROSSE WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP]

Bound for the semi-finals

Canada's Aurora Cordingley, centre-back, celebrates scoring a goal with her teammates during the quarter-final match between Canada and Japan at the 2026 World Lacrosse Women's Championship at Oi Hockey Stadium on Wednesday in Tokyo. Canada won 5-4

TAKASHI AOYAMA/GETTY IMAGES

Vancouver selects group led by real estate developer as partner for MLB expansion bid

Group's proposal centres on a new ballpark and mixed-use development, although no site has been announced

The City of Vancouver has selected a group led by Vancouver real estate developer Zack Ross as its preferred partner to pursue a Major League Baseball expansion franchise.

Ross, president of Vancouver real estate developer Cape Group, leads The Show Vancouver (TSV), a group formed to bring an MLB team to the city.

The group's proposal is centred on a new ballpark and mixed-use development, although no site has been announced. Nor has the group disclosed the estimated cost of the project, its projected economic impact or how the project would be financed.

Ross said in a statement that Vancouver "is one of the great cities in the world, and we deserve a Major League Baseball team."

Mayor Ken Sim launched an expression-of-interest process this spring seeking a qualified ownership group with the financial capacity and experience to advance an MLB bid.

MLB commissioner Rob Manfred told Sportsnet in October that another Canadian city in the league could work, when he was asked about adding a team in Vancouver.

The league has not announced plans to expand, although Manfred has previously said he hopes MLB will grow from 30 to 32 teams before his planned retirement in 2029.

The city said council had directed staff to enter a memorandum of understanding with The Show Vancouver to establish the collaboration framework, "including due diligence for potential ballpark sites."

"TSV will be responsible for all costs and financial risks associated with preparing and advancing its MLB bid," the city said.

It added that the city would collaborate with TSV as it explored a potential expansion bid, and any future project agreements, including site selection and land-use decisions, would be subject to council approval.

BC Place Stadium hosted several Major League Baseball exhibition series between 1984 and 1994, featuring the Toronto Blue Jays, Seattle Mariners and Montreal Expos.

However, a $500-million renovation completed in 2011, including a centre-hung scoreboard and cable-supported retractable roof, eliminated the stadium's ability to host baseball.

The Show Vancouver is partnering with BRS Sports, a sports marketing and analytics company, whose principals include former NHL executive Jac Sperling, sports venue consultant Tim Romani and Denver real estate executive Ray Baker.

The group said it has retained ballpark architecture firm Populous, project management firm CAA Icon and architecture and design firm Gensler to help develop the proposal.

The group's announcement included endorsements from Greater Vancouver Board of Trade president Bridgitte Anderson and former B.C. premier Mike Harcourt.

Vancouver is currently home to the Vancouver Canadians, the Blue Jays' single-A affiliate, which plays at the 6,500-seat Nat Bailey Stadium.

"MLB in Vancouver will showcase our city's global character to the world," said Ross. "But first and foremost, this is a community asset, and we will always act as its steward."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Yesavage, Okamoto lead Blue Jays to series-clinching win over Nationals

WASHINGTON

Trey Yesavage allowed one run in 6⅔ innings, Kazuma Okamoto went 3-for-5 with two RBIs and two runs, and the Toronto Blue Jays defeated the Washington Nationals 5-2 on Wednesday.

The Blue Jays improved to 13-18-4 in series play and completed their six-game road trip at 3-3.

Yesavage (5-5) struck out four and walked three. The 23-year-old rookie worked his third quality start in his past five games and lowered his ERA to 3.73.

The Nats got on the board first thanks to Jacob Young's RBI double in the fourth.

Ernie Clement hit an RBI double in the sixth to drive in George Springer, and Daulton Varsho singled to bring Okamoto across in the seventh.

Okamoto added insurance with a two-run double in the eighth, and Springer tacked on one more with a single.

Washington threatened to take the lead after loading the bases with one out in the eighth, but Louis Varland entered and worked out of the jam.

Varland also threw a scoreless ninth for his 23rd save.

For the Nats, James Wood was 2-for-3, and Luis García Jr. drove in a run in the eighth. Starter Luke Littell worked 4⅔ innings and surrendered four hits while striking out two. Orlando Ribalta (0-2) took the loss in relief.

The Blue Jays will have Thursday off before hosting the Cardinals. RHP Kyle Leahy (7-4, 3.55 ERA) starts for St. Louis. Toronto has not announced a starter.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

FIFA CHARGES ARGENTINA OVER WORLD CUP FINAL SCUFFLE, 'MALVINAS' BANNER

FIFA lodged disciplinary charges against two Argentina players Wednesday for striking Spain opponents moments after the World Cup final and charged Argentina's soccer federation for players showing a political banner about the Falkland Islands after beating England in the semi-finals.

A list of disciplinary cases opened by FIFA against Argentina also include "discriminatory chants and gestures" by fans, alleged assault by an assistant coach after the final and "throwing of objects by spectators in relation to several matches" at the World Cup.

Argentina midfielder Leandro Paredes faces three charges of assault in the postgame clashes after Spain's 1-0 win on July 19, defender Nahuel Molina faces two charges and coach Roberto Ayala one.

Molina and Thiago Almada also are charged with unsporting behaviour, with the same charge levelled against Spain player Gavi.

Argentina's players carried a banner with the slogan "Las Malvinas son Argentinas" – "The Malvinas are Argentine" – after beating England 2-1 in the semi-finals.

Argentina refers to the Falkland Islands as Islas Malvinas. They were invaded in 1982 under orders from Argentina's then-military dictatorship, triggering a 10-week war won by Britain.

British government officials urged FIFA to investigate, and the soccer body said Wednesday the formal charge was "using a sports event for demonstrations of a non-sporting nature."

FIFA said all the people charged "have now been provided with the opportunity to present their position, following which a decision will be issued by the FIFA disciplinary committee in due course."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

FIFA

FROM B11

If the FIFA Forward Enterprise subsidiary is approved by a majority of the 211 members, they also each are promised US$20-million in funding from the four-year commercial cycle tied to the men's 2030 World Cup.

That would lead, Infantino wrote, to "a pool of diverse international investors" joining Joshua Kushner's Thrive as the anchor investor: "This process will be led by J.P. Morgan."

If Infantino's plan is rejected, those members will get their previously promised US$10-million over the next four years, his letter stated.

The cash difference on offer Wednesday to FIFA members appears to be US$86-million over 12 years compared to about US$36-million in existing promised funding for rejecting the private equity deal.

The rushed deadline to claim an initial US$20-million "says everything you need to know about this plan," UEFA said. "FIFA cannot continue to use our sport to enrich themselves and their friends."

Dozens of member federations typically rely on FIFA for funding, have national teams with little realistic chance of qualifying for World Cups, and whose best players rarely, if ever, join clubs playing at the highest level of international competitions.

FIFA's one-member, one-vote democratic system means the most powerful soccer nations on the field can be outvoted by those who rarely play top-level games.

FIFA's plan met quick opposition from British Prime Minister Andy Burnham, whose government is preparing to support hosting the 2035 Women's World Cup in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. FIFA is set to confirm that lone bid for 2035 at an online meeting in November.

"Football does not belong to investors," Burnham, a long-time soccer fan, said in a video message on Instagram. "Once you have sold a piece of [the World Cup], you have sold out. Football belongs to the fans. It always has, and it always will."

Resistance by British lawmakers – including threats of legislation by then-prime minister Boris Johnson in 2021 – previously helped stop the divisive European Super League project that was an existential threat to UEFA's Champions League, and which Infantino had discreetly supported.

Infantino has seemed to be cruising toward being re-elected unopposed as FIFA president for a fourth and final term through 2031.

The candidate entry deadline is Nov. 18 for an election scheduled next March 18 at Rabat in Morocco.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WPBL: League is all over social media while looking to sell tickets and merchandise

FROM B11

While women have been connected to baseball since the beginning of the game, the first professional women's league was the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League. Immortalized in the film *A League of Their Own*, it ran from 1943-54.

The AAGPBL began during the Second World War as a softball league before converting to baseball. Jean Faut, Doris Sams and Dottie Kamenshek were among the league's best players. Maybelle Blair, who pitched in the AAGPBL in 1948, is on the WPBL's advisory board.

"It was never intended to last past 1945 when it first started, but the fact that it lasts through 1954 tells you something about the importance, I think," said Heaphy, an associate professor at Kent State-Stark.

"It tells you about the determination of those involved, and I think it tells you a lot about the interest of the fans."

After the AAGPBL ceased operations, it would be another 40 years – in the wake of the box office success for *A League of Their Own* – before interest in professional women's baseball resurfaced.

From 1994-97, Hall of Fame pitcher Phil Niekro managed an all-female pro team, the Colorado Silver Bullets, that barnstormed the country facing men's amateur and semi-pro teams. The Ladies Professional Baseball League played in 1997 and part of 1998 before folding. It was based in the southwestern United States before expanding to New York and New Jersey. Former big league sluggers Bobby Bonds and George Foster were involved in another short-lived league in the mid-1990s in Florida.

The Women's Baseball World Cup launched in 2004 and will be played for the 11th time in 2027. Japan has won the last eight World Cups after finishing runner-up to the U.S. in the first two.

Skirts were part of the uniform for AAGPBL players, and they were required to attend charm school. There was an emphasis on femininity and "ladylike" behaviour, according to the Baseball Hall of Fame.

The WPBL is all over social media, detailing the background of its players while looking to sell tickets and merchandise.

"We know this was true in the forties and fifties, that people tended then to follow the team because of the place, and then the players. Now they follow players, right? That's what people do," Heaphy said.

"So I think that issue of raising awareness, both leagues recognize that."

Arthur Meyerhoff, a Chicago advertising executive, played a prominent role in the creation and operation of the AAGPBL.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cody Fajardo of the Edmonton Elks became the first CFL quarterback to throw for more than 500 yards in a game since 2017. In last week's 36-34 win over the Saskatchewan Roughriders, Fajardro had 510 yards and four touchdowns. KAYLE NEIS/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Elks look for home-and-home sweep over Roughriders

Lions turn to rookie pivot Salter as they head to Winnipeg

DAN RALPH

Cody Fajardo and the Edmonton Elks have a tough act to follow Saturday night.

Fajardo threw for a career-best 510 yards and four TDs in leading Edmonton (6-1) to a thrilling 36-34 road win over the Saskatchewan Roughriders (4-2) last week. The two teams go back at it again at Commonwealth Stadium.

Fajardo became the first CFL quarterback to throw for 500 yards in a game since 2017. The Elks also accumulated 526 net offensive yards against the defending Grey Cup champions yet still needed Vincent Blanchard's 57-yard field goal on the game's final play to capture a third straight victory.

Receiver Austin Mack also had a stellar outing. He recorded four catches for 173 yards with two touchdowns – 57-yard and 81-yard receptions in the second half – while teammate T.J. Luther registered 10 receptions for 157 yards.

Saskatchewan's defence did a nice job against Justin Rankin, holding Edmonton's explosive running back to 39 yards rushing on 12 carries (3.3-yard average). It also had three sacks.

Riders' starter Trevor Harris was 26-of-36 passing for 386 yards with four touchdowns and an interception. Kian Schaeffer-Baker had eight catches for a game-high 186 yards and a touchdown as Saskatchewan's offence converted 13-of-23 second-down opportunities.

But the Riders might be without A.J. Ouellette, who ran for 52 yards on 12 carries before leaving with a knee injury.

Saskatchewan's defence entered last week's game as one of the CFL's best. It was ranked first in fewest offensive yards (354.2 yards per game), passing yards (266.6), offensive TDs (11) and touchdown passes allowed (four) and had surrendered a league-low three completions of 30-plus yards.

After last week's contest, Saskatchewan dropped to sixth in net offensive yards allowed (382.8), fifth against the pass (307.2 yards) and second in 30-yard completions (seven). But it remains first in fewest passing TDs (eight) and offensive touchdowns (15) surrendered.

Saskatchewan head coach Corey Mace is also its defensive co-ordinator. There's little doubt the necessary adjustments will be made in time for Saturday's contest.

Edmonton is 3-0 at home while Saskatchewan is 2-0 on the road. The game is important because a win would allow the Elks to clinch the season series and the tie-breaker should the teams finish the year tied.

Edmonton last started 4-0 at home in 2019, and last won a season series with Saskatchewan in 2016.

Pick: Saskatchewan

B.C. LIONS VS. WINNIPEG BLUE BOMBERS (THURSDAY NIGHT)

At Winnipeg, rookie Kaidon Salter starts for B.C. (1-5). Chase Brice completed 14 of 25 passes for 163 yards in last week's 26-12 loss to Toronto, his first CFL start, before Salter completed nine of 15 passes for 121 yards in relief.

Salter's quarterback coach and offensive co-ordinator at Liberty University was former CFL head coach and Hall of Fame quarterback Kent Austin. Salter replaced Shedeur Sanders at Colorado in 2025.

Dru Brown makes a fourth straight start for the Bombers (4-3) and threw four interceptions in last week's 52-30 home loss to Calgary. Brady Oliveira ran for a season-high 128 yards and two touchdowns despite being underutilized in the fourth quarter versus the Stamps.

Pick: Winnipeg

MONTREAL ALOUETTES VS. OTTAWA REDBLACKS (FRIDAY NIGHT)

At Ottawa, the Redblacks (0-6) come off the bye just in time to face the streaking Alouettes (6-1, four straight wins). Montreal won 37-35 at Molson Stadium in the teams' previous meeting this season. The good news for the home team is three of its six losses have been by five points or less, including its 36-34 setback to Winnipeg at TD Place on July 19.

The Als come off a short week (31-18 home win over Hamilton on Sunday), a game that saw starter Davis Alexander's streak of 300-yard passing games end at six. Maybe they could get caught looking ahead to next week's showdown with Edmonton. Then again, likely not.

Pick: Montreal

CALGARY STAMPEDERS VS. HAMILTON TIGER-CATS (SATURDAY AFTERNOON)

At Hamilton, there was much to like about the Ticats (3-4) last week. Isaiah Wooden had a punt-return TD, the defence was solid, and Canadian quarterback Tre Ford played decently as the team took an 18-17 lead into the fourth.

But Ford's pick helped Montreal outscore the visitors 14-0 in the quarter while accumulating 167 yards rushing. Calgary (3-4) comes off a 52-point outburst against Winnipeg as former Ticat Tyreik McAllister became the first CFL player to score rushing, receiving and return TDs in a game.

Vernon Adams Jr. has thrown a CFL-high 20 touchdown passes with no interceptions while Dedrick Mills (584 yards with 6.1-yard average) is the league's rushing leader.

Pick: Calgary

Last week: 3-1
Overall: 16-14

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Josh Allen advocates for change as Bills open training camp under new coach Joe Brady

JOHN WAWROW PITTSFORD, N.Y.

As Josh Allen launched into a defence of the Buffalo Bills' new alternate "Nickel City" uniforms on Wednesday, the quarterback segued into making a bigger-picture case of embracing change.

It's a concept the 30-year-old Allen has had to accept personally in becoming a new father this spring, and professionally this off-season. The ninth-year player enters his first NFL campaign under a new coach in Joe Brady, and with the team preparing to move into its new US$2.1-billion stadium.

And the same approach, he said, should apply to those who have spent the past few days on social media criticizing the grey uniforms with blue helmets Buffalo debuted this week.

"Stop hating on the jerseys, guys," Allen said after the Bills opened training camp.

"It's a new look. I understand that. But we've got to be new. And I think these jerseys are kind of symbolic of that," he added. "I understand people want the old jerseys and the old helmets and all that. But at some point, too, we are moving forward. We have to move forward and do something new."

The Bills opened camp with familiar high expectations but with an altogether fresh approach. It's now on Brady, who at 36 enters this season as the NFL's youngest head coach, to oversee a talented team that's perennially fallen short of a Super Bowl berth in the previous nine years under Sean McDermott.

The coaching change came in January, mere days after Buffalo's latest collapse in a 33-30 overtime loss to Denver in the AFC divisional round. The defeat, and Allen's teary-eyed postgame news conference, were the last straws for owner Terry Pegula in believing the Bills had hit " the proverbial playoff wall."

Though Brady represents change for a franchise that's reached the playoffs in seven consecutive seasons, he also reflects a semblance of continuity in having spent the previous two-plus years as Buffalo's offensive co-ordinator.

Brady put familiarity and the past aside in stressing this being a new start.

"This is Year 1 for everybody. Like I told the team, we've never been here before, right?" Brady said. "This training camp is going to be different than we've ever had. And that's not to say anything that we've ever done was wrong. It's just I need guys to understand that approach, and we can't assume anything."

And that includes any initial expectations of the team being a playoff contender: "We haven't earned a damned thing," he said.

Allen and an offence that finished fourth overall in yards and led the NFL in rushing last year returns mostly intact.

It's on defence where the Bills have undergone the most significant changes. The unit is now overseen by first-time NFL co-ordinator Jim Leonhard, who is seeking to establish more of an attacking identity and making the switch to a 3-4 system.

Buffalo returns only six of 11 defensive starters from last season.

Among the newcomers are veteran hard-hitting safety C.J. Gardner-Johnson.

"I think that the standard here right now is winning. Championship and winning," Gardner-Johnson said. "Everybody understand what's going on. We're too good of a team to fall short. It's as simple as that."

Among Brady's initial tweaks to training camp include an earlier practice time, with sessions opening at 8:30 a.m. as opposed to 9:45 a.m. under McDermott. The Bills also worked at a faster pace, finishing their first practice in 90 minutes.

"It's the first time in my four years here that we're under time, so that's nice," centre Connor McGovern said. "It's nice getting out here so early. It's 10 o'clock and you're already done with the hardest physical part of the day."

Brady refused to let a persistent drizzle dampen his day by actually welcoming the rain.

"Who says it's a crappy day? It's football," Brady said. "This is perfect. It's the first day, 8:30 practice, raining. That's what I want. It's got to be a tough camp. … You want it to be hard. This isn't supposed to be just fun."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

KC assistant Bieniemy remains with family after wife's shooting

DAVE SKRETTA ST. JOSEPH, MO.

The Kansas City Chiefs held their first full-squad workout of training camp Wednesday without offensive co-ordinator Eric Bieniemy, who remained with his family following the shooting of his wife – allegedly by their son – at their Virginia home last weekend.

Coach Andy Reid said after the workout that Mia Bieniemy had been released from the intensive care unit, where she was being treated for multiple gunshot wounds. But there was no timetable for when Eric Bieniemy would be back with the team.

"She's making progress," Reid said, "so we're happy about that."

Elijah Zion Bieniemy, the 27-year-old son of the couple, was arrested in connection with the late-Sunday shooting. He was charged with malicious wounding, use of a firearm in commission of a felony and discharge of a firearm inside a dwelling, and was being held without bond Wednesday at the Loudoun County Adult Detention Center.

Elijah Bieniemy has a court date to hear motions scheduled for Thursday. His preliminary hearing date is Aug. 31.

Eric Bieniemy returned earlier this year to Kansas City, where he experienced his greatest success as an assistant. He was instrumental in the team reaching three Super Bowls and winning two of them before departing for the Washington Commanders in 2023, where he had wanted to build upon his résumé in the hopes of landing a head coaching job.

Bieniemy was part of Ron Rivera's staff that was let go following that season, though. He spent one season as offensive co-ordinator at UCLA before spending last season coaching the running backs with the Chicago Bears.

However long he misses training camp is noteworthy, given Bieniemy is trying to get up to speed with any changes to Reid's playbook over the past few years. But the team is uniquely suited to press on without him during an important part of training camp.

Not only does it have continuity on its coaching staff but it has veteran leaders on the offensive side of the ball.

Pass game co-ordinator Joe Bleymaier, who has been with the team for the past decade and is widely considered a rising star in the profession, has assumed many of Bieniemy's responsibilities. Others have fallen upon veteran offensive line coach Andy Heck, who has held that job ever since Reid's initial Kansas City coaching staff was put together following the 2012 season.

There's also the fact that Reid has a heavy hand in running the offence. He receives plenty of input from his co-ordinators, but it is ultimately Reid who calls the plays on game day, and who has the ear of quarterback Patrick Mahomes.

As for the two-time MVP, who is coming off reconstructive surgery on his left knee, Mahomes knows the Kansas City offence as well as anybody besides his head coach. And when you add in veterans such as tight end Travis Kelce, offensive linemen Creed Humphrey and Trey Smith, and wide receivers Rashee Rice and Xavier Worthy, there is plenty of experience out on the field.

"We'll be able to keep it moving here," Reid said.

Meanwhile, Mahomes looked sharp in his first seven-on-seven and 11-on-11 work of camp Wednesday, even though the players won't have pads on for several more days. At one point, he zipped a pass between two defenders to Kelce for a nice gain in the red zone.

"I feel stronger than I've ever felt as far as strength and lifting and stuff like that," Mahomes said, "so now it's just about getting that quarterback stuff down, the stuff moving in the pocket quick – making those quick movements – reacting and doing stuff like that.

"I feel like I wasn't playing my best football at the end of last year before I got hurt," he added. "I've got to find ways to get better, kind of navigating the pocket, run the offence better, getting the ball out of my hands and letting guys make plays. So I think this injury has kind of helped me focus on those little things as I kind of get back to who I am."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Canada's Sarah Mitton makes a throw during the women's shot put final at the 2026 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland on Wednesday. She won the gold medal with a throw of 19.88 metres. PHIL NOBLE/REUTERS

Mitton defends Commonwealth Games shot put crown

Two-time Olympian from Brooklyn, N.S. won her event by two metres

Canada's Sarah Mitton successfully defended her women's shot put title at the Commonwealth Games on Wednesday.

The 30-year-old from Brooklyn, N.S., recorded a winning throw of 19.88 metres on her fifth attempt to take gold by more than two metres.

"I'm pretty proud," Mitton told Athletics Canada. "Every time you step into the stadium, there's a chance that it doesn't go your way and you do everything in your power to make your dreams come true.

"Tonight, to be able to stand on the podium and be a two-time Commonwealth Games champion is, is very special to me."

Nigeria's Jessica Oji won silver and Jamaica's Lloydricia Cameron took bronze, both with throws of 17.87. Oji finished second based on her better next-best throw of 17.70.

Mitton, who represented Canada at the past two Summer Olympics, is also a two-time world indoor champion and the 2023 world silver medalist.

Earlier Wednesday, Alex Bellemarre captured silver in the men's 94-kilogram weightlifting category. The 28-year-old from La Sarre, Que., set a Commonwealth record with a 159-kilogram snatch before lifting 187 kilograms in the clean and jerk for a total of 346.

Malaysia's Mohamad Syahmi Bin Nor-Ghazali won gold with a total of 347 after setting a Games record of 197 kilograms in the clean and jerk. Australia's Oliver Riley Saxton took bronze with 336. Rose Beaudoin of Ste-Marie-Madeleine, Que., won Canada's second weightlifting medal of the day with bronze in the women's 86-kilogram event.

Beaudoin lifted 103 kilograms in the snatch and 127 in the clean and jerk for a total of 230.

Reed De'Aeth scored a game-high nine points with four rebounds and five assists as Canada's men's 3x3 wheelchair basketball team won bronze with a 19-9 victory over host Scotland. Garrett Ostepchuk added five points, two rebounds and three assists.

"I think mentally we just stayed focused on the moment," Ostepchuk said. "We didn't let too much affect us mistakes-wise or the officiating or what Scotland were doing. We just focused on our game, and that was the goal the entire time."

The Canadian women fell 19-17 to Australia in their bronze-medal game.

Wheelchair racer Nandini Sharma of Brampton, Ont., was stripped of a silver medal after being disqualified for obstruction in the women's 1,500-metre T54 final following a season-best 3:42.38.

Athletics Canada appealed the disqualification, but the jury's decision was to let the disqualification stand and that the race to be rerun with the remaining athletes.

"While AC is disappointed with this decision, we accept the process and look forward to Nandini competing again in the T53/54 400-metre race," Athletics Canada said in a statement.

One day after securing five medals at the pool, Canada struck out on the final day of swimming competitions with multiple near misses.

Toronto's Joshua Liendo, who won gold in the men's 100 butterfly Sunday, placed fourth in the 50-metre butterfly in 23.30 seconds, 0.38 shy of a medal.

The women's 4x100 medley relay team, led by 11-time Commonwealth medalist Kylie Masse of LaSalle, Ont., then finished 0.12 seconds off the podium.

Canada led after the first two legs and remained in medal position for most of the race before South Africa's Rebecca Meder caught Madison Kryger of Niagara Falls late in the freestyle anchor leg. Australia won gold and Scotland claimed silver.

In boxing, Edmonton's Amber-Jane Wall advanced to the women's 51kg semi-finals with a unanimous 5-0 victory over Niamh Brookes of Wales. Joshua Ofori, also from Edmonton, moved on to the men's 70kg final four via walkover.

Canada sat second in the Commonwealth table with 14 gold medals, trailing only Australia's 47. Canada also had 11 silver and 14 bronze for 39 total medals through Day 6 of the Games.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sauvageau named Canada's women's hockey GM

CALGARY

Hockey Canada is turning to a familiar face to oversee the next generation of its women's team by naming Daniele Sauvageau as general manager on Wednesday.

The 64-year-old Hockey Hall of Famer reprises the role she held as GM and coach of Canada's first gold medal-winning women's team at the 2002 Salt Lake City Games. And the hiring comes after Sauvageau won the PWHL Walter Cup in May as GM of the Montreal Victoire.

Sauvageau's contract with Hockey Canada runs through the 2030 Games in France. And she will maintain her position with the Victoire through next season before joining Hockey Canada in a full-time role in also helping guide the women's under-18 and development teams.

"Joining Hockey Canada as general manager of the National Women's Program is a privilege," Sauvageau said. "Working alongside the country's best women's hockey players and staff as we prepare for the 2030 Olympic Winter Games is an incredible opportunity and we have our sights set on showing the very best performance at every opportunity along the way."

Sauvageau replaces Gina Kingsbury, whose contract was not renewed after eight seasons. Among her first priorities are hiring a new coach after Troy Ryan elected to not renew his contract after six years this spring.

The moves come after Canada settled for silver in losing the gold-medal final to the United States at the Milan Games in February. The Canadians are also expected to enter a transitional phase with a much-needed injection of young talent to replace numerous veterans who are anticipated to retire before 2030.

Among the aging stars are 35-year-old captain Marie-Philip Poulin, who has yet to determine her future.

The U.S., meantime, has already made the transition to youth and featured an Olympic team that included seven players still in college.

Though Canada leads with 13 world hockey titles, the U.S. is second with 11 and has won seven of the past 10 tournaments. Canada also has a 5-3 edge over the Americans in Olympic gold medals.

"We need to develop not only the national team, but the rest of the country," Sauvageau said. "Tremendous work has been done over the last years. But now it's just a matter of, [with] the new landscape, to make sure that we are agile, accurate and on top of supporting the best athletes across the country."

Sauvageau, in 2025, became the first woman hall of fame inductee in the builder's category. She's a former Montreal police officer and was the first female coach in the Quebec Maritime Junior Hockey League, serving as an assistant with the Montreal Rocket in 1999-2000.

She founded the University of Montreal women's hockey team and founded a women's hockey high-performance centre in Verdun, Que.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

RAPTORS TO HOST PRESEASON GAMES IN QUEBEC CITY, VANCOUVER

The Toronto Raptors will host games in Quebec City and Vancouver as part of their NBA preseason.

The league announced Wednesday that Toronto will face the Miami Heat in the NBA's first preseason game in Quebec City at Videotron Centre on Oct. 3.

The Raptors will then take on the Los Angeles Clippers at Vancouver's Rogers Arena on Oct. 10.

The NBA club also announced it will hold training camp in Quebec City from Sept. 29 through Oct. 2 at Université Laval's PEPS athletic complex.

Toronto will conclude its preseason with a home-and-home against the New York Knicks on Oct. 13 at Scotiabank Arena and Oct. 15 at Madison Square Garden before visiting the Detroit Pistons on Oct. 16.

The NBA has not yet released its schedule for the 2026-27 season.

"We have great memories of our 2019 training camp in Quebec City, and the opportunity to spend time in such a historic city, combined with the outstanding facilities at Université Laval, made returning an easy decision," said Raptors general manager and executive vice-president Bobby Webster in a statement.

"We're looking forward to playing our first NBA Canada game in Quebec City before returning to Vancouver, which has become a home away from home for our organization."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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DEATHS

DAVID WILLIAM BEIRNES

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of David William Beirnes at Southlake Health, in Newmarket, on Tuesday, July 21, 2026, at the age of 73, following his journey with Alzheimer's disease.

David was a devoted father to Adam, Kathleen and Diana; a proud grandfather to Jaylen and Evelyn; brother to Helane Ladouceur; and son of the late Stanley and Gwenneth Beirnes. He shared many years of marriage with Laurelle, with whom he raised his family. Together, David and Laurelle were immensely proud of the family they built.

David enjoyed a long and distinguished career as a senior finance executive. He began his career with Campeau Corporation, where he played a key role in the development of the Scotia Plaza office tower in Toronto. He later moved into the hospitality industry before finding his true calling in seniors' housing, serving as Chief Financial Officer of Retirement Residences REIT.

David dedicated much of his professional life to Ontario's long-term care sector, providing financial leadership to organizations committed to caring for seniors. He also served with the Ontario Long Term Care Association, working collaboratively with the Association, government, and industry leaders to help lay the foundation for what would become the largest long-term care redevelopment program in Ontario's history.

Throughout his career, David was known for his integrity, financial expertise, and thoughtful leadership. He earned the respect and admiration of colleagues across the industry, leaving a lasting legacy through both the projects he helped shape and the people he mentored along the way.

While David valued his professional accomplishments, those who knew him best knew that his greatest legacy was the life he built for his family. He believed that taking care of his family meant working hard so they could succeed in their own lives. Through decades of hard work, thoughtful planning and sacrifice, he created a foundation of stability and security that became one of the greatest gifts he could leave his family.

Outside of work, David found joy in life's simple moments. He loved taking long drives to admire the autumn colours, capturing the beauty of the world through his camera, and spending time outdoors on walks or around the yard. He rarely remained a stranger for long, whether chatting with neighbours or striking up a conversation with someone he had just met. His warmth came naturally, and those who knew him often described him with the same words: genuinely kind, approachable and simply a nice person.

During the final years of his life, David was grateful for the love, care and companionship of his partner, Donna, whose support meant so much to both him and his family as they navigated the challenges of Alzheimer's disease.

Alzheimer's gradually changed so much of who David was, but it never changed how deeply he was loved. His family will remember the man he was before the disease: the father, grandfather, colleague and friend whose kindness left a lasting impression on everyone he met.

Donations in David's memory to the Alzheimer's Society would be greatly appreciated. It is our hope that continued research and support will one day spare other families from walking the same difficult path. You can find the donation page at: https://alzheimersocietyinmemoriam.crowdchange.ca/page/davidbeirnes.

David will be remembered for his kindness, integrity, generosity, unwavering work ethic, and above all, the love and pride he had for his family.

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OLIVER JONES

MUSICIAN, 91

REVERED PIANIST TRANSFORMED JAZZ SCENE IN MONTREAL AND BEYOND

A composer and fleet-fingered dazzler who combined keyboard fireworks with a bluesy swing, he won four Félix Awards and two Juno Awards and was invested as an Officer of the Order of Canada in 1994

BRAD WHEELER

Pianist Oliver Jones performs at the Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival in Moscow, Idaho, in February, 1994. Mr. Jones often played for appreciative crowds at Montreal International Jazz Festival, a landmark event on the global jazz calendar. STEPHANE OUZOUNOFF/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Jazz pianist Oliver Jones was a prodigy comfortable with his family's Layton Brothers piano by the time he was 3. At 5, he boogie-woogied in front of an audience for the first time, at Montreal's Union United Church, Canada's oldest Black congregation.

Though instructed in classical music, he played gospel songs broadcast by a West Virginia radio station from memory. One afternoon, the child heard teenaged Oscar Peterson, who lived nearby, practising through an open apartment window.

Mr. Peterson would develop into one of the greatest pianists to ever bebop and swing. His intimidating skill could either inspire one to play better or cause one to quit altogether. Mr. Jones, in elementary school at the time, was of the former mindset. He knocked on the door, which was answered by Mr. Peterson's older sister and piano teacher, Daisy Peterson Sweeney.

"Can you teach me to play like that?" the precocious pianist asked. She could and did.

"I was hired by his parents and I immediately discovered his talent," Ms. Sweeney said in Marthe Sansregret's biography, *Oliver Jones: The Musician, the Man*. "Anything he would hear played, he would play it back. He used to copy what he heard from me, from Oscar, from anybody."

Mr. Jones, a composer and fleet-fingered dazzler who combined keyboard fireworks with a bluesy swing, died after a long illness in Montreal General Hospital on July 22. He was 91. The title of his 1985 album *Speak Low, Swing Hard* could serve as a eulogy.

The quiet, serious man and gentle soul was unavoidably compared to Mr. Peterson because of the history and flashy musical style the two virtuosos shared. When Mr. Peterson's health began to fail in the 1990s, the younger Mr. Jones took on the unofficial role of Canada's jazz ambassador to the world.

"He had an innate ability to read a room," said Jim West, his manager and the founder of Justin Time Records label, which released more than 20 of the pianist's albums. "Just by looking at an audience for a few moments, he understood who he was playing for."

He often played for appreciative crowds at Montreal International Jazz Festival, a landmark event on the global jazz calendar that grew in status thanks in part to Mr. Jones's regular presence.

"He was a humble man," said festival co-founder and former artistic director André Ménard. "Sometimes we had to remind Oliver how great he was."

He was invested as an Officer of the Order of Canada in 1994. The Canadian Music Hall of Fame inductee won four Félix Awards and two Juno Awards (for 2008's *Second Time Around*, as a trio, and 1985's *Lights of Burgundy*, as a quintet). The pianist collaborated with singer Ranee Lee on a pair of albums.

"He had perfect pitch and his mind was a Rolodex of music," Ms. Lee said. "There was a comfort in his company, on stage and off."

Mr. Jones's tour of Nigeria was the subject of a 1990 National Film Board of Canada documentary, *Oliver Jones in Africa*. Canada Post commemorated Mr. Jones on a stamp in 2013, part of a series that paid tribute to Black history. His parents, according to the pianist's biography, were descendants of enslaved Africans forced to labour on the plantations of British-ruled Barbados.

"The stamp meant a lot to Oliver," Mr. West said, "He told me at the time, 'Man, if my parents could see this.' "

After a triple bypass surgery in 2015, Mr. Jones announced his official retirement in 2016.

Mr. Jones receives the Governor-General's Performing Arts Award from Michaëlle Jean in Ottawa in 2005. JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The well-liked musician was a mentor. He taught music at McGill University in Montreal and Laurentian University in Sudbury. "I believe in giving back," he told The Globe and Mail in 2013. "If I can instill in youngsters a similar passion for music, then I feel I have done what I was born to do."

Oliver Theophilus Jones arrived into this world in Montreal's Royal Victoria Hospital on Sept. 11, 1934, the fourth of four children of immigrants Oliver Wesley Jones and Jestina Louise Jones (née Burrowes). He was a mechanic with the Canadian Pacific Railway; she was a seamstress whose immigration papers assigned her the professional category of "domestic," according to Mr. Jones's biography.

He was raised in the city's vibrant Little Burgundy neighbourhood, referred to at the time as the Harlem of the North. Mr. Jones's craze for the piano was nearly matched by his passion for sports, especially hockey. Sensing he wasn't talented enough to become the next Rocket Richard, he dreamed more realistically, about being an Elmer Lach or Toe Blake – the Rocket's associates on the Montreal Canadiens' famed Punch Line.

He was also a fan of Jackie Robinson, who in 1946 played for the Montreal Royals in the city's Delorimier Stadium. One year later, Mr. Robinson became the first Black player in Major League Baseball as a member of the Brooklyn Dodgers. (In 1998, Mr. Jones wrote and performed the original score to the documentary film *Season of Change*, about Mr. Robinson's summer in Montreal.)

By the time he was 12, Mr. Jones had performed at Café St-Michel, an important cabaret in the development of the Montreal jazz scene. Mr. Jones later told NPR he "saw a lot of what I wasn't supposed to see – girlie girls and strippers."

What Mr. Jones wasn't seeing was a lot of money as a teenager playing clubs and hotels in the Montreal area. In the early 1960s, he moved to Miami as calypso singer Kenny Hamilton's bandleader. From there, a four-month residency with the Vegas-style revue in San Juan turned into a 16-year job, 40 weeks a year.

He was based out of the Americana Hotel in a Puerto Rico that was booming because clubs and casinos had relocated to the U.S. territory after the Cuban Revolution. The band also toured internationally with Bob Hope's United Service Organizations shows.

"It was a wonderful time," Mr. Jones told NPR. "Puerto Rico was really starting to flourish, so I was there during that heyday."

Though the job paid the bills, the steady gig was artistically unsatisfying. The music was commercial, not jazz, often played on electric keyboard instead of piano. He later told The Globe and Mail he was a "cautious" person who missed out on opportunities.

"I don't know if it was a lack of confidence in myself," he said. "I remember I had a chance to be the pianist for the Supremes years ago, but I turned that down, not thinking that I was ready."

In the early 1980s, he was ready to return to Montreal. Though Mr. Jones was in his mid-40s and hadn't played jazz seriously in years, he found work in the Les Voyageurs cocktail lounge in the Queen Elizabeth Hotel in the afternoons, and Biddle's Jazz and Ribs six nights a week. It was at the latter establishment where Mr. Jones, performing with drummer Bernard Primeau and club co-founder and bassist Charles Biddle, attracted attention.

"At 47, he proves worthy of the city's lineage of hard-driving jazz pianists, with a little of Art Tatum in his playing, a little of Erroll Garner and, indeed, a little of every technically accomplished, swinging player of the 1940s," Globe jazz critic Mark Miller wrote in 1982. "His first solo of any given evening at Biddle's comes just after 10:30, and it develops from a lightly fingered act of musical levitation to a rocking, two-fisted conclusion. In a matter of minutes, the room is buzzing."

The talk of the city's jazz scene was spotted at the venue by Mr. West one night. "It was an incredible performance," he said. "I thought it needed to be documented."

A subsequent performance by the Oliver Jones Trio resulted in 1983's *Live at Biddles Jazz and Ribs*, the first album released with the newly founded Justin Time Records. The set list included a jaunty version of Mr. Peterson's 1962 composition *Hymn to Freedom*, written in honour of Martin Luther King Jr.

Mr. Jones and Mr. Peterson performed duets of *Hymn to Freedom* and the jazz standard *Just Friends* at the 2004 Montreal International Jazz Festival.

In 2005, he recorded the album *Just You, Just Me* with Ms. Lee. The singer visited Mr. Jones in the hospital in the months before he died. On one of the occasions, he asked her to sing the jazz standard *Body and Soul*.

Closer to his death, he requested *In a Sentimental Mood* by Duke Ellington and Manny Kurtz, recorded in the year after Mr. Jones was born. Ms. Lee said her friend mouthed the lyrics as she sang.

"In a sentimental mood, I can see the stars come through my room / While your loving attitude, is like a flame that lights the gloom."

He leaves his son, Richard Jones, and long-time partner Monique Leclerc.

To submit an I Remember: **obit@globeandmail.com**
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